United Nations

A/61/161

General Assembly

Distr.: General
18 July 2006
English
Original: Arabic/Chinese/
English/Spanish

Sixty-first session
Agenda item 82 of the provisional agenda*
Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security

Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security

Report of the Secretary-General

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* A/61/150.

06-43425 (E) 090806 090806

I. Introduction

1. In paragraph 3 of its resolution 60/45, on developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security, the General Assembly invited all Member States to continue to inform the Secretary-General of their views and assessments on the following questions: (a) general appreciation of the issues of information security; (b) efforts taken at the national level to strengthen information security and promote international cooperation in this field; (c) the content of relevant international concepts aimed at strengthening the security of global information and telecommunications systems; and (d) possible measures that could be taken by the international community to strengthen information security at the global level.

2. On 23 February 2006, a note verbale was sent to Member States inviting them to inform the Secretary-General of their views and assessments on the subject. The replies received are contained in section II below. Additional replies received will be issued as addendums to the present report.

II. Replies received from Governments

Bolivia

[Original: Spanish]
[13 June 2006]

General Assembly resolution 60/45 promotes the consideration, at multilateral levels, of existing and potential threats in the field of information security, as well as measures to limit the threat emerging in this field, consistent with the need to preserve the free flow of information.

General appreciation of the issues of information security

Because of the considerable progress achieved in developing and applying information technologies and means of telecommunication, such as the Internet, the fax machine and the cellular telephone, information is now available in an indiscriminate and unrestricted form, at the global level, thereby making it possible to gain access to classified information.

However, this process also brings the broadest positive opportunities for the development of civilization, the expansion of opportunities for cooperation for the common good of all States and the achievement of new goals for the benefit of mankind.

In the area of defence, information security is managed at a low level (generally by the office of the company offering the service). There are usually no relevant domestic security policies.

Efforts taken at the national level to strengthen information security and promote international cooperation in this field

With respect to the existing and potential threats in the sphere of information and telecommunications security and possible cooperation measures to address them, there is an existing procedure under which information obtained is

transmitted, as appropriate, to the Ministry of Information, and regulated by the Superintendency of Telecommunications.

In the area of defence, the security measures adopted are insufficient, in the context of today's advanced technologies.

Bolivia is currently developing telecommunications projects that incorporate the highest-level information security measures, using coded transmission procedures. These projects are designed to reduce and/or eliminate the deficiencies identified.

The content of the concepts mentioned in paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 60/45

Bolivia believes that the measures proposed in paragraph 2 might be promoted through an evaluation of the relevant international concepts designed to strengthen the security of global information and telecommunications systems.

Possible measures that could be taken by the international community to strengthen information security at the global level

- Evaluation of information and telecommunications security issues at the international level;
- Definition of basic criteria regarding information and telecommunications security and unauthorized access to, or illicit use of such systems via the Internet;
- Development of international principles aimed at increasing the security of information and telecommunications systems at the global level and also contributing to the fight against terrorism and against trafficking in classified information;
- Expression of concern at the possibility that such measures and technologies may be used for purposes that are contrary to the goal of guaranteeing the stability and security of States;
- In the military and defence sphere, implementation of telecommunications systems equipped with security systems that incorporate advances in global technology.

Recommendations

Information security should be regarded as a State policy, enshrined in the relevant telecommunications law, and regulated and controlled by the relevant Superintendency of Telecommunications.

With respect to information security at the national level, it is necessary to implement telecommunications projects that use the latest technology with a view to ensuring that operational projects incorporate the highest-level security measures available in the telecommunications sector.

China

[Original: Chinese]
[24 May 2006]

Information technology is currently undergoing explosive development, and has become an important positive factor in the economic and social development of countries as well as in the improvement of the lives of their people. At the same time, the development and broad application of information technology have entailed unprecedented challenges to the security of individual States and of the international community as a whole. The problem of information security has already become a major factor influencing the comprehensive security of States and even global security and stability. The appropriate resolution of this problem in accordance with the collective benefit of all countries is a shared responsibility of the international community.

It is the view of China that the problem of information security not only involves the risks arising from the weakness of the basic information infrastructure, but also the political, economic, military, social, cultural and numerous other types of problems created by the misuse of information technology. Each of these two factors is worthy of equal concern when studying the problem of information security.

China holds that information technology should be used in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the basic principles of international relations; the free flow of information should be guaranteed under the premises that national sovereignty and security must be safeguarded and that the historical, cultural and political differences among countries be respected; each country has the right to manage its own cyberspace in accordance with its domestic legislation; and in view of the imbalances among countries in the development of telecommunications, the international community should also strengthen cooperation in the research and application of information technology and conscientiously ensure that each country enjoys the freedom of information technology.

The United Nations is the appropriate setting in which to resolve the problem of information security. Although a group of Governmental experts on information security was unable to achieve substantive results in 2005, experts from various countries nevertheless engaged in a profound exchange of ideas and offered numerous valuable proposals with regard to a range of topics in the field of information security, thereby laying a solid foundation for the continued discussion and resolution of information-security problems by the international community. China supports the re-convening by the United Nations in 2009 of a Governmental experts group to carry out a deep and comprehensive study of the threats and challenges in the field of information security along with programmes and policies to address them. China will continue, as it has in the past, to support and participate in international efforts to deal with the problem of information security.

06-43425

Jordan

[Original: Arabic]
[5 June 2006]

Information security is related to the concept of national security and the information security system has a direct connection with telecommunications security since it is through telecommunications that information is transmitted and exchanged through networks, whether wired or wireless. In order to protect and strengthen the security of information and telecommunications the following are required:

(a) The establishment of regulations, laws and systems to protect the confidentiality, integrity and provision of information and to counter attacks on it and the exploitation of information systems for the commission of crimes;

(b) The establishment of a national plan to underpin the function of ensuring the security of information, telecommunications and networks with the participation of those involved in the information and networks sector. The plan should ensure the following:

1. Confidentiality and reliability: ensuring that the information is not disclosed and does not become known to unauthorized persons;

2. Integrity of content: ensuring that information content is sound and has not been modified or interfered with, and that the content has not been destroyed, altered or tinkered with at any stage of handling or exchange, whether during internal treatment or through illegal interference;

3. Continued availability of the information or service: ensuring continued working of information systems and continued ability to interact with the information and to provide service to information sites and ensuring that the user of the information is not prevented from using or accessing it;

4. Non-repudiation of information-related action by the person involved: ensuring that the person who is involved in information-related action or information sites cannot deny having been involved because it can be proved that a particular action was performed by a particular person at a particular time;

(c) Establishing a strategy for information security, namely a set of rules that are applied by the persons handling the technology and the information within the establishment connected with input and working with and managing information systems. The objectives of the strategy are: to familiarize users and administrators with their obligations and duties to protect computer systems and networks as well as protecting the information in all its forms at the stages of input, processing, storage, transfer and retrieval.

Lebanon

[Original: Arabic]
[21 June 2006]

In response to the question concerning developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security, the Ministry of National Defence states as follows:

With respect to the appraisal of information security issues, armed forces information networks are closed networks to which passive security measures apply because modern technology is not available to protect the information owing to the high cost of implementation. As regards telecommunication networks, these are based on the country-wide civilian communications structure which is subject to general law and for that reason security measures are not applied to them.

In the efforts made at the national level to strengthen information security there is a significant difference in legal prosecutions in relation to the technology of informatics and telecommunications as the latter are consistently ahead of the law. In Lebanon the currently available law is No. 140 of 27 October 1999, relating to the protection of the right to the confidentiality of correspondence and conditions for its interception on the basis of a judicial or administrative request in accordance with the conditions specified in articles 2 to 13 of the law. It is worth mentioning here that the legislation is not adequate to coordinate between the security bodies and civilian businesses (ISP-GSM) with a view to standardizing efforts regarding the prosecution, investigation and prevention of potential threats in this field. This highlights the need for international cooperation in this area and for technical and legal expertise to close the gaps between the law and technology in Lebanon.

Qatar

[Original: Arabic]
[12 June 2006]

With respect to developments in the field of telecommunications in the context of international security, the Government of the State of Qatar is making great efforts to exercise complete control over the security of information and of telecommunications in order to avoid existing and potential dangers in information security, by promulgating the necessary legislation to that end.

Qatar recently established a Supreme Council for Communications and Information Technology which comprises a legal department the task of which is to complete the draft Electronic Law of the State and to submit it to the competent authorities, ensure its ratification and bring it into force during the current year. The purpose of the draft law is to prevent the use of computer hardware or technology for criminal or terrorist purposes. The law also requires the competent authorities to define criminal and terrorist purposes so as to make the Member States fully cognizant thereof so that they can carry out their obligations more comprehensively and try to arrive at standard definitions in connection with concepts on which agreement has not been reached internationally in order to facilitate discussion in international forums.

United Arab Emirates

[Original: English]
[17 June 2006]

The United Arab Emirates realizes the growing danger of cybercrime and recognizes that crimes committed in cyberspace do not end at the conventional State borders. Modern information and communications systems make it possible to perform illegal activities from any location and against anyone anywhere.

In order to successfully combat cybercrime, effective action is necessary at the national and international levels.

The United Arab Emirates has taken considerable efforts in strengthening information security at the national level, including:

- **United Arab Emirates cybercrime law**

  The cybercrime law was approved and published in early 2006. It covers the following:

  - Access crimes (unauthorized access, virus dissemination, hacking, identity theft)
  - Data crimes (interception, modification, theft, privacy)
  - Network crimes (interference, modification, destruction)
  - Other related crimes (enabling the commission of crimes, drug trafficking, trafficking in persons, money-laundering, terrorist acts)

  The law also addresses censorship and objectionable material. Non-compliance with the cybercrime law will lead to imprisonment or financial penalties or both.

- **National Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT) Initiative**

  The Telecommunication Regulatory Authority of the United Arab Emirates is looking into establishing a national Computer Emergency Response Team to improve security, respond to cyberattacks, provide early warning and information about cyberthreats, coordinate all incident response activities and build awareness through training and education in the country.

- **Internal service providers code of conduct**

  The United Arab Emirates is on the verge of drafting an enforceable code of conduct for Internet service providers (ISPs) which will force Internet service providers to be efficient and more proactive in reducing bulk e-mails which may contain viruses. ISPs will be expected to proactively scan traffic for open relays, botnets and networks of compromised personal computers used for sending spam. ISPs will also be required to include clauses in their contracts allowing them to disconnect users if they are intentionally or unintentionally relaying spam. Non-compliance with any part of the code will lead to penalties or sanctions.

  The Internet code of conduct is intended to require service providers to abide by high standards of conduct and business practice within the ISP community.

• **Bilateral agreements**

The ISPs in the United Arab Emirates have actively engaged in bilateral agreements between neighbouring countries in combating spam and have been successful in reducing spam being relayed outside the country. The United Arab Emirates promotes and encourages international cooperation with regard to combating cybercrime, and supports the exploration of memorandums of understanding in terms of information-sharing and cross-border enforcement support.

• **Awareness campaigns/education**

The Government/Telecommunication Regulatory Authority and the industry are working side by side in promoting awareness and educating people about the benefits that technology offers them and the dangers associated with cybercrime.

For instance, the Telecommunication Regulatory Authority recently released the "Wireless Security Guidelines" and the "Web Hosting policy". The former provides details on how to set up a wireless network and what steps should be taken for successful secured deployment. The latter outlines the acceptable use of the service, which includes: usage policy; spam policy; policy on intellectual property violations; and policy on illegal contents.

• **Importance of technical measures in the context of international security**

Several technological measures already exist to aid in securing cyberspace, including:

- Deployment of public key infrastructures (PKI), and the development of secure protocols;
- Development of quality software, firewalls, anti-virus programmes, electronic rights management systems, encryption, etc.;
- Use of smart cards, biometric identification, electronic signatures, role-based technologies, etc.

However, as cyberspace becomes more and more complex and its components more sophisticated, new and unforeseen threats are emerging. Hence, the need for an increased effort to develop security technologies and to always consider security at the outset of the design process of any future technology.

• **Possible measures to strengthen information security at the global level**

- International collaboration is a must since cybercrime is a borderless crime and cannot be controlled by conventional methods;
- Common legal framework set in place will allow smooth exchange of information and collaboration between countries. In addition, a global definition of cybercrime needs to be addressed, bearing in mind that the specific definitions will vary from country to country;
- Law enforcement authorities should be accustomed to dealing with crimes committed in cyberspace. They should be able to search and seize data stored on computers to avoid destruction of criminal evidence.

United Nations

A/61/162

General Assembly

Distr.: General
19 July 2006

Original: English

Sixty-first session
Item 55 (a) of the provisional agenda*
Groups of countries in special situations: Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

Summary of informal interactive hearings of the General Assembly with representatives of non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and the private sector

Note by the President of the General Assembly

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 60/228, the General Assembly requested the President of the General Assembly to organize one-day informal interactive hearings with representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations and the private sector, in preparation for the high-level meeting on the midterm comprehensive global review of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010. The President of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly has the honour to transmit the summary of those interactive hearings, held in New York on 22 June 2006.

2. The objective of the one-day hearings was to give an opportunity for NGOs, civil society and the private sector to interact with Member States and offer input on the midterm comprehensive global review of the implementation of the Brussels Programme. The midterm review aims at assessing progress made in the implementation of the Programme of Action, sharing best practices and lessons learned and identifying obstacles and constraints to the further implementation of the Brussels Programme.

3. Adopted at the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries in Brussels in 2001, the Brussels Programme provides a framework for a global partnership between the least developed countries and their development partners to "accelerate sustained economic growth and sustainable development in the least developed countries, to end marginalization by eradicating poverty, inequality and deprivation in these countries and to enable them to integrate

* A/61/50.

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beneficially into the global economy". In resolution 59/244, the General Assembly decided to hold the midterm comprehensive review of the implementation of the Brussels Programme in 2006.

4. The President of the General Assembly established a taskforce of representatives of non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and the private sector to assist him in preparations for the informal interactive hearings. The taskforce assisted in formulating the theme and sub-themes of the hearings, determining the format of the hearings and identifying speakers and active participants. The United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (OHRLLS) served as the substantive secretariat for the preparations.

5. The hearings were held under the theme "Forging partnership with civil society and the private sector for poverty reduction in the least developed countries". They were opened by the President of the General Assembly. The Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations made a statement. Statements were also made by the Permanent Representative of Benin to the United Nations, as Coordinator of the Group of Least Developed Countries, and the Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States. The President of LDC Watch, a non-governmental organization, gave the keynote address.

6. In his capacity as Vice-President of the General Assembly, the Permanent Representative of Guinea-Bissau to the United Nations presided over the two successive interactive sessions. The first session focused on the theme "Harnessing partnership for sustainable development in the least developed countries" and the second session on "Unleashing entrepreneurship to end poverty in the least developed countries". Each session consisted of statements by representatives of non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and the private sector and an interactive exchange of views with participating Member States.

7. At the closing of the hearings, a summary of main issues arising from the two sessions was presented by the Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States. This was followed by a closing statement by the President of the General Assembly. He expressed hope that the recommendations made during these hearings would be given due consideration at the high-level meeting in September, and that some of them would be translated into concrete actions in support of the development efforts of least developed countries. He recommended that dialogue between Member States and civil society, NGOs and the private sector should be pursued at various levels and in various forums throughout the implementation of the Brussels Programme.

II. Key findings

8. **Among the findings that emerged from the hearings were:**

(a) **Partnerships should be reinforced not only between the public and the private sector, but also between developed and least developed countries and between least developed and other developing countries;**

(b) All actors must honour their responsibilities under the Brussels Programme if its goals and targets as well as the Millennium Development Goals are to be met in the least developed countries;

(c) Slow progress witnessed in the least developed countries is mainly due to structural weaknesses — a combination of pervasive poverty and weak institutional, technical and human capacities;

(d) It is important to empower women so that they can contribute fully to development efforts in the least developed countries. Young people also need to be put at the forefront of the development agenda in the least developed countries. The concerns of internally displaced persons (IDPs) also need attention;

(e) There is urgent need to support development of the agricultural sector, promote food security and rural development as an important contributor to economic and social development in the least developed countries. Inadequate infrastructure and insufficient domestic and external financial resources were considered to be reasons for low investment in agriculture;

(f) There is a strong need to increase the amount and effectiveness of official development assistance (ODA) to the least developed countries. There should be a focus on outputs and deliverables, and on how and where ODA is spent;

(g) More emphasis should be put on improving good governance and environmental sustainability;

(h) Microfinance and small and medium-sized enterprises play an important role in promoting sustainable economic development. The private sector can make a significant contribution to poverty reduction through core business activities, provided they are done in a responsible, sustainable and inclusive manner;

(i) There is great need to increase the production capacities of the least developed countries. Improvement of infrastructure, including access to information and communication technology (ICT), is vital. Human resources in the least developed countries should be improved through adequately funded education and health programmes. There is also a need to promote institutional and regulatory frameworks that are conducive to private sector development;

(j) Trade is very important to poverty eradication in the least developed countries. There is an urgent need to address supply-side constraints and eliminate agricultural subsidies in developed countries, which have a detrimental effect on the export performance of the least developed countries;

(k) There is a global "advocacy gap" on least developed country issues. A global advocacy campaign, at both national and international levels, should be launched for the implementation of the Brussels Programme during the second half of the decade;

(l) Civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations can play a key role as partners in the implementation of the Brussels Programme. The least developed countries should provide an environment that encourages

them to play their supportive role. They should be supported to build their capacities;

(m) **International financial institutions and the donor community should renew and redeem their commitments made in the Brussels Programme.**

III. Interactive sessions

A. Cross-cutting themes

9. A number of recurrent themes and concerns emerged across the two interactive sessions, which included: (a) partnerships; (b) good governance; (c) resources for development; (d) trade; (e) migration; and (f) vulnerable groups.

1. Partnerships

10. Participants emphasized the importance of partnerships in view of the framework stipulated in the Brussels Programme and Millennium Development Goal 8 — "Develop a global partnership for development".

11. Recalling the failure of the first two decade-long programmes of action for least developed countries, participants raised concerns about the resolve of the international community to fulfil the commitments made in 2001. While underscoring the primary responsibility of least developed countries for their own development, participants called on developed countries to fulfil their commitments in order to meet the goals and objectives of the Brussels Programme by 2010. Several participants addressed the needs of least developed countries, such as an increase in the quantity and quality of aid, targeted social sector spending, capacity-building and good governance. There seemed to be general agreement about the responsibilities of both industrialized countries and the least developed countries for the development of the least developed countries and the need for the close involvement of civil society, NGOs and the private sector in their development efforts.

12. It was noted that the partnership should be built on trust between the public and private sectors, NGOs and government. Many participants noted that there is a general mistrust between development partners and governments in the least developed countries, as well as between NGOs and governments, which hampers efforts to reduce poverty. The role of civil society and NGOs must be recognized by the private sector and government, so as to become true partners in development efforts. NGOs, civil society and the private sector were urged to create and maintain a dialogue with government in order to share experiences and generate innovative ways for sustainable development. Institutional support is necessary to build the capacity of these actors to engage productively with one another.

13. Some Member States shared with participants their efforts to contribute to the development agenda of the least developed countries. They included supporting emerging markets, infrastructure development and South-South cooperation, and promoting socially responsible behaviour among their companies in developing countries.

14. Participants reaffirmed the great potential of South-South cooperation in areas such as trade, health, disaster risk reduction and early warning systems. They, however, pointed out the need for the least developed countries to remain cautious and ensure that assistance is not tied.

15. Participants requested the least developed countries to create a favourable investment climate to effectively harness the partnerships between international and local companies and nurture entrepreneurship. These countries have to improve their regulatory frameworks on property rights, access to finance and basic infrastructure. Policies to promote the role of the private sector in poverty eradication must include social dimensions, such as supporting women and people in disadvantaged situations so that they can participate equally in the economy. In this regard, the Global Compact agenda should be promoted to pursue ethical business practices.

16. The United Nations system was called upon to collaborate with all stakeholders to expedite the implementation of the Brussels Programme.

2. Good governance

17. Referring to Commitment 2 of the Brussels Programme — "Good governance at national and international level" — and to the recently launched OHRLLS/United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) report on governance in the least developed countries,[1] participants underscored the importance of good governance as a prerequisite for development. They emphasized the need for good governance and the required policy framework to ensure the utilization of revenues from natural resources for poverty eradication.

18. It was emphasized that fighting corruption is essential to maximizing the use of limited resources. To ensure accountability and transparency, there is a need to monitor and evaluate good governance initiatives.

19. The significance of traditional models of governance, respect of local values and collective responsibility was highlighted. Indigenous societies often have an effective mechanism to promote their own development objectives that should be respected by the international community. Participants learned from some indigenous initiatives with effective mechanisms for reducing poverty. The least developed countries and the international community must ensure that ODA is used to support locally initiated development projects. In that connection, the United Nations was requested to monitor ODA flows to ensure that those resources reach locally initiated projects.

3. Resources for development

20. Financial resources are needed to address the basic needs of the people, and to promote equitable and sustainable growth in the least developed countries. Participants noted that financial resources can be mobilized through the cancellation of all the debt of all least developed countries; the promotion of self-help mechanisms, such as microfinance and cooperatives; the increase of ODA to meet the target of 0.7 per cent (for developing countries) and 0.2 per cent (for the least

[1] United Nations Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States and the United Nations Development Programme, *Governance for the Future: Democracy and Development in the Least Developed Countries*, New York, 2006.

developed countries) of gross national income, increased market access for least developed countries' exports to developed countries and innovative financing mechanisms such as an air ticket levy. Participants also stressed the need for home-grown ideas in mobilizing financial resources. In that respect, the successful work of NGOs, civil society and the private sector in the area of microfinance was given as an example of how simple ideas could change the lives of millions of poor people.

21. Several participants called on donors not only to provide aid for emergencies, but also to ensure adequate, predictable resources for long-term development. One participant suggested that aid could be used to create employment and decent work, which is a major challenge in the least developed countries. It was also recommended that incoming aid should be directed to rural areas, where it is needed most. Participants stressed the need for the integration of a gender perspective and women's equal participation in aid programmes.

4. Trade

22. Many participants called for a fair trade framework, citing shortcomings in the existing global trade regime. They stressed that often development concerns are sidelined in trade negotiations. Limited human and financial capacity in the least developed countries seriously hampers the ability of their representatives to fully engage in international trade talks. In the context of the World Trade Organization (WTO) process, participants called for: (a) careful consideration in the classification of least developed countries to avoid countries backsliding to the least developed country category as a result of premature graduation; and (b) the creation of an environment that enables least developed countries to truly participate in the WTO negotiation process.

23. Participants called on developed countries to act on their commitments to make the WTO Doha round of trade negotiations a "development round" by developing pro-poor trade policies and providing genuine opportunities for poverty reduction in the least developed countries through trade. While preferential market access is yet to deliver the expected benefits to the least developed countries, participants identified the following as priority needs: (a) granting bound duty- and quota-free access to all exports of all least developed countries on a permanent basis; (b) reduction in tariff peaks, tariff escalation and non-tariff barriers; (c) simplification of restrictive rules of origin; (d) free movement of labour; and (e) establishment of a global fund to address the erosion of preferences.

24. It was observed that the integration of the least developed countries into the world economy through better market access remains a major challenge. Although the development package recently agreed upon at the Hong Kong WTO Ministerial Conference providing duty-free and quota-free market access to at least 97 per cent of products originating from least developed countries was appreciated, much more needs to be done to increase access of least developed countries to the international market. Developed countries were called upon to provide quota-free market access to all least developed countries' exports.

25. There was a broad understanding that large subsidies given to farmers in developed nations distort agricultural production in the least developed countries. Many participants called for the total elimination of subsidies and for reform of international agreements on agricultural trade.

5. Migration

26. Another area of focus during the two interactive sessions was the free movement of labour and policies to improve labour mobility. As in the case of the free flow of goods, services and capital, civil society should call for a global market of unskilled labour, and continue efforts to press for substantive progress on a WTO agreement on the temporary entry into developed countries of labour from the least developed countries.

6. Vulnerable groups

27. The least developed countries were encouraged to create pro-poor policies that are specifically geared towards the vulnerable groups, especially women, youth, people living with HIV/AIDS, the disabled and the displaced. The participation of these groups in policy formulation and implementation is crucial to the achievement of the goals of the Brussels Programme.

28. Some participants stressed that women in poor countries bore the brunt of extreme poverty, and called for concerted efforts by least developed country Governments to ensure their inclusion in decision-making processes. The AIDS pandemic has also affected disproportionately impoverished women, who, as a result, are "locked out" of income-generating activities. Often illiterate and subject to a range of cultural restrictions, women in poorer countries earn far less than their male counterparts. Participants urged the least developed countries to actively involve women in the preparation of development plans, rural development programmes and management of natural resources. The least developed countries should apply innovative methods when addressing particular challenges that hinder women's entry into business.

29. Participants recalled that young people are assets to society and could make a significant contribution to the implementation of the Brussels Programme. The integration of youth issues into all least developed countries' policies should be given special attention. A platform should be created to enable effective participation of young people in decision-making processes at national, regional and international levels.

30. Attention was drawn to the plight of internally displaced persons (IDPs). Many of the least developed countries host IDPs and refugees from neighbouring countries without sufficient capacity and infrastructure to support them. It was noted that refugees can contribute to the local economy. Therefore, IDPs should be given equal opportunities to participate fully in economic development. Full rights to move and to earn a livelihood need to be granted to IDPs and refugees. Instruments to support the basic rights of IDPs and refugees are internationally available and should be applied by Governments. The international community should take into consideration initiatives such as the "Good Humanitarian Donorship", to bridge the gap between relief and long-term development. In addition, development assistance should be used to create adequate conditions to sustain returnees.

B. First session: harnessing partnerships for sustainable development in the least developed countries

1. Global campaign in support of the least developed countries

31. Several interventions highlighted an "advocacy gap" for the least developed countries and called for the need to start a global awareness campaign for the least developed countries. This campaign would focus on issues such as full debt cancellation, increased and untied ODA, foreign direct investment flows and strengthening the role of women in decision-making. The message of the proposed global campaign should be directed at the least developed countries and their development partners. The campaign should take into account the voice of women and connect with grass-roots groups and think tanks. In the context of this campaign, participants called on Member States to organize hearings on the Brussels Programme. One participant called for dedicated "least developed country-slots" in all conferences and summits.

32. Participants underscored the important role of OHRLLS, but also noted that the Office is not equipped with adequate human and financial resources to fully implement its mandate.

2. National development strategies

33. Participants felt that it is essential to develop appropriate national development strategies to achieve the goals of the Brussels Programme and the Millennium Development Goals. Such strategies should address real concerns of the poor such as health care, education, employment and decent work, access to clean water and political and social empowerment. Governments should develop "bottom-up" approaches where local communities can conceive, plan and implement their development projects. The least developed countries have the primary responsibility to put in place effective policies that are responsive to the needs of all their citizens. Participants pointed out that civil society, NGOs, the private sector and government should work together to develop and implement good national development plans. These efforts should be supported by the international community and multilateral institutions, particularly the United Nations system, through the provision of adequate resources and technical assistance.

3. Information and communication technologies

34. The importance of information and communication technology (ICT) to the achievement of the goals and targets of the Brussels Programme was underlined by various participants. It was stressed that ICT can be used to promote democratic governance and poverty reduction.

35. To benefit fully from ICT, the least developed countries need software applications, particularly in the area of e-governance. Donors, both public and private, were called upon to assist the least developed countries in making this software available, as financial resources remain inadequate. Recommendations were made for: (a) donor countries to offer free e-governance software investments in the least developed countries and encourage software-reuse at the national level, as well as open source technologies and multi-language software interfaces in their ICT development; (b) the least developed countries to create an enabling environment to facilitate transfer of knowledge and ensure compatibility and

sustainability with regard to infrastructure, local industries and human capital; and (c) the United Nations to play a central role in the creation of an ICT framework.

4. Health and education

36. Participants expressed concern about the lack of adequate financial resources for the health sector, in particular for the fight against HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases, such as malaria. Representatives of civil society called on international partners to help in funding local NGO reproductive health initiatives. They urged for a stronger collaboration among all partners providing reproductive health services to share a common agenda in promoting sex education programmes. Concern was raised about the role of the private sector in strategic areas such as access to water and health-care services. It was stressed that in these areas civil society had a role to play in monitoring the engagement of the private sector and in ensuring that the poor, who are most vulnerable, are protected.

37. With the continuing shortage of adequate resources for long-term development activities, the quality of education is still a major challenge in the least developed countries. Teachers should be given attractive incentives: better wages and working conditions, training and teaching materials. In addition, educational curricula should be aligned with the demand of respective labour markets.

C. Second session: unleashing entrepreneurship to end poverty in the least developed countries

1. Business and investment environment

38. The important role of the private sector in development was reiterated. Private sector representatives stressed their interest in promoting social progress, including innovative ways to engage low-income communities in business activities by creating "win-win" situations for achieving sustainable development. Examples of such initiatives were shared. Business partners from developed countries may provide advisory services to developing countries to build regional networks of the small and medium-sized enterprises. Cooperation between public and private sectors should be fostered so that the private sector's wealth of knowledge and resources can be utilized for sustainable development.

39. Private sector participants and some Member States stressed that policy and economic instability were serious threats to poverty eradication in the least developed countries. They recommended that the Governments of the least developed countries should accelerate the creation of favourable business environments and encourage business to harness its innovation and problem-solving skills for economic development. The need to improve regulatory frameworks to uphold property rights was also emphasized. Capacity-building and access to finance for local enterprises and entrepreneurs were highlighted as being vital to the development of the formal sector.

2. Infrastructure and basic services

40. Most participants agreed that investment in basic infrastructure, especially roads, energy, telecommunications and ports, was essential to attracting foreign direct investment and to development activities in general. Although this type of

investment is the primary responsibility of the country concerned, the support of the international community is needed not only in financial terms but also to ensure policy coherence without losing sight of social development dimensions.

41. Concern was raised with regard to the recent trends in privatization of public sector services such as the provision of water, energy and health-care services. Privatization is a complex issue even for developed countries; the least developed countries therefore have to carefully examine its consequences, as it might deteriorate access to essential services. In many cases, State intervention is still required for the provision of basic infrastructure and services.

3. Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises

42. The importance of microcredit provision, especially for women in rural areas, was emphasized by a number of participants. Participants highlighted the potential risks of overdependence on microfinance in the absence of an effective regulatory framework. They called for the provision of capacity-building opportunities to those engaged in the informal sector.

43. Participants called on the Governments of the least developed countries to create an enabling environment for small and medium-sized enterprises, including the provision of training and capacity-building for those engaged in small and medium-sized enterprise activities. Small and medium-sized enterprises are important creators of employment, and there is a need to increase their capacity to generate employment.

44. A successful example of developing sustainable entrepreneurship was shared with participants. The project focuses on grass-roots development for microenterprises in rural areas while protecting local culture and natural environment. The project was successful as it incorporated the cultural context of different ethnic groups and provided educational opportunities that included literacy programmes and ethical conduct. It was emphasized that support for rural women and entrepreneurship among the youth, such as favourable access to credit, is crucial for these vulnerable groups to be able to engage in income-generating activities.

4. Agriculture and employment

45. The absence of processing industries for agricultural products in the least developed countries hinders their agricultural sector from further developing and generating employment. Accordingly, Governments with support of the international community should establish basic infrastructure for agricultural processing industries and create an enabling environment for private sector development through the promotion of land and property rights. Adequate attention should be paid to ecosystems management, for efforts to eliminate poverty to be effective.

46. Unemployment of youth is a major cause of not only poverty but also juvenile delinquency, which may lead to political unrest. Thus, youth employment should be a national concern. Young people need financial and technical support for entrepreneurship. Furthermore, young farmers should be given incentives to stay engaged in the agricultural sector. Agribusiness involves a large section of the population, so there is a need for different and inclusive policy approaches to generate employment. In addition, regional initiatives such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development should support rural family farmers, while international

agreements must be fully implemented. The United Nations system also has an important role to play through organizations such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

47. It was recommended that the least developed countries spend more resources on the development of agriculture. It was noted that most governments fell short of the targets of the 2003 Maputo Declaration, which recommended an increase in allocations for agriculture to 10 per cent of national budgets within five years. Capacity-building in the agriculture sector must be accompanied by land and property rights to enable farmers to own and invest in their land.

United Nations A/61/163

General Assembly

Distr.: General
19 July 2006

Original: English

Sixty-first session
Item 88 (e) of the provisional agenda*
Review and implementation of the Concluding Document of the Twelfth Special Session of the General Assembly

United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report contains an account of the activities undertaken by the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific during the period from August 2005 to July 2006. The wide support received from Member States and academic institutes within and outside the region has reaffirmed the role played by the Centre in fostering dialogue and cooperation in the field of disarmament and security in the region.

During the reporting period, the Centre continued to promote disarmament and security dialogue through the organization of meetings and conferences in the Asia and Pacific region. Such meetings and conferences were organized in Kyoto and Nagasaki, Japan; Busan, Republic of Korea; Bangkok; and Beijing. The Centre continued to assist the five Central Asian States in the finalization of a treaty on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia. The Centre also continued to provide assistance to Mongolia in taking the necessary measures to consolidate and strengthen its international security and nuclear-weapon-free status.

The Department for Disarmament Affairs has continued consultations with the Government of Nepal on the relocation of the Centre with a view to finalizing the host country agreement and the related memorandum of understanding to ensure the physical operation of the Centre from Kathmandu and to enable it to function effectively.

* A/61/150.

06-43589 (E) 110806

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I. Introduction

1. On 8 December 2005, the General Assembly adopted, without a vote, resolution 60/85 entitled "United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific". In paragraphs 5, 6 and 7 of that resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to provide the Regional Centre with the necessary support, within existing resources, in carrying out its programme of activities; urged him to ensure the physical operation of the Regional Centre from Kathmandu within six months of the date of signature of the host country agreement and to enable the Centre to function effectively; and requested him to report to the Assembly at its sixty-first session on the implementation of the resolution.

2. The present report covers the activities of the Centre during the period from August 2005 to July 2006. A financial statement on the status of the Trust Fund for the Regional Centre covering the biennium 2004-2005 is contained in annex I. A list of planned activities of the Centre for which financial support from interested donors is being sought appears in annex II. In addition to the Trust Fund for the Regional Centre, activities of the Centre may be funded from voluntary contributions to other disarmament trust funds.

II. Activities of the Centre

3. The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific has continued to enjoy the strong support of Member States and academic institutes within and outside the region for its role in encouraging regional and subregional dialogue for the enhancement of openness, transparency and confidence-building and the promotion of disarmament and security. The regional meetings on various disarmament and security-related issues organized by the Centre have been highly commended by the General Assembly and the Asia and Pacific community.

4. During the reporting period, the Centre organized, within the limited financial resources available through voluntary contributions of Member States and other interested organizations, a number of conferences and meetings, as described below.

5. From 17 to 19 August 2005, the Centre organized, in cooperation with the Government of Japan, Kyoto Prefecture and Kyoto City, a regional disarmament conference entitled "The United Nations after six decades and renewed efforts for the promotion of disarmament" in Kyoto, Japan. The conference was attended by approximately 50 participants from Governments, academic and research institutes, the media, and international, regional and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The Kyoto conference considered, inter alia, the report of the United Nations Secretary-General entitled "In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All"; the outcome of the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT); the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA); the issue of compliance; the nuclear fuel cycle; institutional improvements for the NPT and its review process and withdrawal from the Treaty; the Central Asian nuclear-weapon-free-zone treaty; and regional nuclear issues (e.g. the nuclear programmes of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Islamic Republic of Iran). It also addressed the issue of small arms and light weapons, including the outcome of the second Biennial

Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. The conference also considered the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, as well as the issue of disarmament and non-proliferation education.

6. The conference was highly commended by the participants as a useful contribution to endeavours to promote disarmament and non-proliferation dialogue within and outside the Asia and Pacific region. In particular, it provided participants an opportunity to further examine various initiatives put forward at the 2005 NPT Review Conference.

7. On 24 and 25 August 2005, the Centre provided Nagasaki Prefecture and City with technical and substantive support in connection with their symposium entitled "The United Nations and disarmament", which was held in Nagasaki. The symposium was devoted to disarmament and non-proliferation education, with interactive discussion between the panellists and participating university and high school students on disarmament and non-proliferation education, and how to impart knowledge and skills to individuals in order to empower them to make contributions, as national and world citizens, to achieving the ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

8. From 1 to 3 December 2005, the Centre and the Republic of Korea jointly organized a conference on disarmament and non-proliferation issues, entitled "Strengthening the NPT and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery", at Busan, in the Republic of Korea.

9. The fourth in a series of such annual regional disarmament conferences, it was attended by approximately 40 participants from Governments, academic and research institutes, international and regional organizations, as well as NGOs, mainly from the Asia and Pacific region. The Busan conference discussed issues such as challenges to the nuclear non-proliferation regime; ways and means to strengthen and effectively implement the NPT; nuclear fuel cycle; missile non-proliferation; and implementation of the United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) in the Asia and Pacific region.

10. The Centre, in cooperation with the Government of Indonesia, jointly organized a workshop to promote the *United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education* in Bali, Indonesia, from 21 to 22 December 2005.

11. The workshop was attended by approximately 50 participants, including officials from various ministries of the Government of Indonesia, members of parliament, experts from academic and research institutes, international and regional organizations, the press as well as NGOs mainly from Indonesia and its neighbouring States. Presentations were made by the Centre, the secretariat of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, the secretariat of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the European Union's Assistance on Curbing Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Kingdom of Cambodia, and the Nuclear Weapons Education and Action Project.

12. The objective of the workshop was to familiarize the participants with the recommendations derived from the *United Nations study on disarmament and non-*

proliferation education, so as to encourage them to contribute to promoting disarmament and non-proliferation education in their respective fields. The workshop also served as an opportunity for the participants to create a network at the national level between government agencies and non-government institutions, which will support the implementation of Indonesia's commitments in the field of disarmament.

13. The Centre, in close cooperation with the Conventional Arms Branch of the United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs, also organized a workshop on small arms and light weapons for South Asia and South-east Asia entitled "Towards the Review Conference on the Implementation of the Programme of Action", in Bangkok, from 17 to 19 May 2006. The workshop, held at the United Nations Conference Centre of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, was co-sponsored by the Governments of Canada and Japan and by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The Government of Thailand hosted the workshop.

14. Approximately 80 participants, including government representatives, mostly from South and South-east Asia, and experts from research institutes, international and regional organizations and NGOs, attended the workshop.

15. The workshop aimed to provide South and South-east Asian States with an additional opportunity to prepare for the Review Conference on small arms and light weapons and consider their contribution to it by identifying specific problems with small arms and light weapons in the region, addressing challenges and exchanging information, including experiences and best practices on the implementation of the Programme of Action, and encouraging and improving regional cooperation. The workshop succeeded in adopting two reports by South and South-east Asian States as their contribution to the work of the Review Conference. Those States that have not yet submitted a national report expressed their willingness to submit such reports before or during the Review Conference, using information they provided at the workshop.

16. At the initiative of the Government of the People's Republic of China and with the generous support of several Governments, the Centre and the Government of China organized a United Nations seminar on implementing United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) in Asia and the Pacific in Beijing from 12 to 13 July 2006.

17. Fifty participants, including Government officials from the Asia and Pacific region as well as regional, international and non-governmental organizations, attended the seminar in their personal capacity. The seminar addressed, inter alia, the current status of implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2004); prohibitions specific to Security Council resolution 1540 (2004); measures related to accounting, securing, and the physical protection of nuclear, chemical and biological items, including related materials and means of delivery; as well as export controls and their enforcement.

18. During the reporting period, the Centre continued to maintain close interaction with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific by inviting its members to participate in meetings it had organized. The Director of the Centre attended the international firearm safety seminar entitled "In the right hands", organized by the New Zealand Police in Christchurch, New Zealand, from 21 to

23 February 2006. The New Zealand Police Commissioner informed the audience that the attendance of representatives of the New Zealand Police at the Nadi workshop on small arms and light weapons, organized by the Centre in August 2004, had drawn their attention to regional and international efforts in the field of small arms and light weapons, and had motivated them to contribute to such efforts. The seminar held in Christchurch was one of such efforts. It served as an excellent illustration of the usefulness of regional disarmament efforts being promoted by the Centre and the United Nations as a whole.

19. The Centre has further explored the possibility of cooperation with regional and subregional organizations, including the Pacific Island Forum, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), academic institutes and NGOs in the Asia and Pacific region, by inviting them to participate in the dialogue facilitated by the Centre on security and disarmament issues. The Centre also held consultations with some ASEAN members and some Central Asian States to explore cooperation in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation education.

20. The Centre continued to maintain effective working relationships with disarmament-related intergovernmental organizations. In that connection, IAEA, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization participated in various conferences organized by the Centre. The Centre will promote further interaction and constructive working relationships with these organizations.

21. In order to raise public awareness, the Centre has initiated the preparation of fact sheets on major regional disarmament initiatives. During the reporting period, two fact sheets entitled "The Asia-Pacific Regional Centre and Issues of Small Arms and Light Weapons" and "Promotion of the United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education" were prepared and distributed to participants of meetings organized by the Centre and to interested Member States at their request.

22. Pursuant to a request by the General Assembly contained in its resolutions 52/38 S, 53/77 A, 55/33 W, 57/69, and to Assembly decisions 54/417, 56/412, 58/518, 59/513 and 60/516, the Centre continued to assist the five Central Asian States in finalizing a treaty to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia. Following the adoption by the five Central Asian States of the text of the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty and its Protocol, in Tashkent on 8 February 2005, consultations are under way among the five Central Asian States to seek support of the nuclear-weapon States for the treaty. In their joint statement adopted in Tashkent (A/59/733-S/2005/155), the five Central Asian States expressed their desire to sign the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty as soon as possible.

23. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 59/73 on Mongolia's international security and nuclear-weapon-free status, the Centre continued to provide assistance to Mongolia in taking the necessary measures to consolidate and strengthen Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status. The Centre organized two meetings (on 17 February and on 13 June 2006) of consultative groups of United Nations departments, programmes, funds and agencies to follow up on the two studies conducted by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and UNDP on Mongolia's economic and ecological vulnerabilities and human security; exchange information on each other's activities to implement General Assembly resolution

59/73, and discuss the preparation of the 2006 report of the Secretary-General on this subject. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Department of Political Affairs, IAEA, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UNDP, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and representatives of Mongolia attended the meetings. A separate report of the Secretary-General on the subject will be submitted to the sixty-first session of the General Assembly.

III. Staffing and financing

24. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 42/39 D of 30 November 1987, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific was established on the basis of existing resources and voluntary contributions that Member States and interested organizations might make to that end. In its resolution 60/85, the General Assembly expressed its appreciation for the continuing political support and voluntary financial contributions to the Regional Centre, which were essential for its continued operation. It also appealed to Member States, in particular those within the Asia and Pacific region, as well as to international governmental and non-governmental organizations and foundations, to make voluntary contributions, the only resources available to the Regional Centre, in order to strengthen its programme of activities and the implementation thereof. In this regard, during the reporting period, the Centre conducted two consultations with Member States in the region and other interested donor countries to campaign for support of the activities of the Centre and for voluntary contributions to the Centre. The Assembly also urged the Secretary-General to ensure the physical operation of the Regional Centre from Kathmandu within six months of the date of signature of the host country agreement and to enable the Centre to function effectively.

25. In that connection, the United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs has continued its consultations with the host Government regarding the relocation to Kathmandu. Since the report of the Secretary-General to the sixtieth session of the General Assembly on this matter, an exchange of correspondence has taken place between the Government of Nepal and the Department for Disarmament Affairs with a view to reaching agreement on the outstanding issues related to the host country agreement and the memorandum of understanding (MOU). The Government of Nepal, in its letters of 21 November 2005 and 31 March 2006, reiterated its eagerness to conclude the host country agreement and the MOU and its desire to see the Centre relocated to Kathmandu within six months of the conclusion of the agreement by the two parties. The Department will finalize the revised documents for signature by both parties concerned, following internal procedures for clearance and approval.

26. At the same time, the Department for Disarmament Affairs continued to focus its efforts on identifying ways and means of ensuring the operational sustainability of the Centre, with particular attention being paid to solutions highlighting efficiency and cost-effectiveness, as well as to the demands and needs of the Asia and Pacific region in today's context.

27. During the reporting period, voluntary contributions in the amount of $56,000 were received. The Secretary-General wishes to express his gratitude to the Governments of Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Republic of Korea and Thailand for their contributions.

28. In addition, the Secretary-General wishes to express his appreciation to the Governments of China, Indonesia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Switzerland and Uzbekistan and to Kyoto Prefecture, Kyoto City, Nagasaki Prefecture and Nagasaki City for their financial and technical support for the United Nations conferences and meetings organized by the Centre during the past year. He is gratified by the continued political and financial support for the Centre from the region. In addition to being funded from the Trust Fund for the Regional Centre, activities of the Centre may also be funded from voluntary contributions to other disarmament trust funds.

29. The Centre's current staff consists of the Director, one associate expert and one General Service staff member. The Centre is seeking additional associate experts so as to implement its mandate fully.

IV. Conclusions

30. The Centre continued its role in serving as a useful forum for regional and subregional dialogue on security and global and regional disarmament issues as well as an instrument for fostering a climate of cooperation and disarmament in the region. Specifically, during the reporting period, the Centre's activities focused on contemporary concerns with regard to the non-proliferation regime, effective implementation of the NPT, promoting implementation of the Programme of Action and assisting States of the region in reporting on their implementation, as well as implementation of the recommendations of the *United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education*.

31. In order to promote further cooperation and interaction, the Centre further expanded its contacts with academic institutes, foundations and regional and subregional organizations within the Asia and Pacific region, as well as with disarmament-related international organizations. The Centre succeeded in raising public awareness about the developments and trends in the field of disarmament and security in the region. The Centre also further expanded its outreach to its constituencies through updating its website and wider distribution of its publications providing information on its various activities.

32. In order for the Centre to ensure its operational sustainability and fulfil its mandate, increased and stable financial support of Member States and interested organizations, which represents the sole financial resources of the Centre, is essential. The Secretary-General reiterates his appeal to Member States, particularly those in the Asia and Pacific region, to continue to make or increase contributions to the Centre in support of its programmes and activities.

Annex I

Status of the Trust Fund for the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific for the biennium 2004-2005

	United States dollars
I. Fund balance as at 1 January 2004	206 118
II. Income	
1 January 2004-31 December 2005	
Voluntary contributions[a]	77 640
Interest income	6 349
Miscellaneous income	3 000
Subtotal	**86 989**
III. Expenditures	
1 January 2004-31 December 2005	118 022
Programme support	15 343
Prior period adjustments	—
Subtotal	**159 700**
IV. Fund balance, 31 December 2005	159 700

Note: Information is based on the Centre's statement of income and expenditure for the biennium 2004-2005 ending 31 December 2005. During the period from 1 January to 30 June 2006, an additional contribution of $3,000 was received from Thailand.

[a] 2004: Indonesia ($10,000), Pakistan ($5,500) and Thailand ($3,000);
2005: Indonesia ($10,000), Kazakhstan ($20,000), Pakistan ($6,140), Republic of Korea ($20,000) and Thailand ($3,000).

Annex II

Planned activities of the Centre

Project I

Title: Eighteenth United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues, in Japan

Purpose: To assist the Asia-Pacific community to promote dialogue on nuclear-proliferation risks

Location: Yokohama, Japan

Duration: 3 days (21-23 August 2006)

Number of participants: 60 participants, including government officials, academics and NGO representatives

Cost estimates	*United States dollars*
Travel of participants	42 000
Travel of staff	24 000
Operating expenses	17 000
Programme support costs	10 800
Total	**93 800**

Project II

Title: United Nations-Republic of Korea joint conference on disarmament and non-proliferation issues

Purpose: Fifth regional disarmament conference to address security concerns in North-East Asia, including nuclear non-proliferation and missile issues

Location: Gyeongju, the Republic of Korea

Duration: 3 days (13-15 December 2006)

Number of participants: Approximately 30 participants, mainly from the Asia and Pacific region

Cost estimates	*United States dollars*
Travel of participants	33 000
Travel of staff	15 000
Operating expenses	6 000
Programme support costs	7 000
Total	**61 000**

Project III

Title: A symposium on the promotion of the United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education

Purpose: To familiarize participants with the United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education, and encourage the implementation of the recommendations contained therein

Location: To be decided

Duration: To be decided

Number of participants: To be decided

Cost estimates	*United States dollars*
Travel of staff (2)	12 000
Programme support costs	1 600
Total	**13 600**

Project IV

Title: United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues, in Japan

Purpose: To assist the Asian and Pacific community to promote dialogue on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation

Location: To be decided

Duration: To be decided

Number of participants: To be decided

Cost estimates	*United States dollars*
Travel of participants	42 000
Travel of staff	24 000
Operating expenses	17 000
Programme support costs	10 800
Total	**93 800**

United Nations A/61/164

General Assembly

Distr.: General
19 July 2006

Original: English

Sixty-first session
Item 87 (d) of the provisional agenda*
General and complete disarmament: Mongolia's international security and nuclear-weapon-free status

Mongolia's international security and nuclear-weapon-free status

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report contains an account of new developments and the assistance accorded to Mongolia by the Secretariat and relevant United Nations bodies since the issuance of the last report on this subject in 2004 (A/59/364). During the reporting period, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific held a series of consultations with Mongolia on ways and means to consolidate Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status. A growing international recognition of Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status can be seen from the increased references to that status at the bilateral, multilateral and international levels.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in collaboration with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), published and distributed widely a report on Mongolia's economic and ecological vulnerabilities. The findings and recommendations of the report have been incorporated in the common country assessment for the period from 2007 to 2011 and in all five of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (2007-2011) outcomes and related outputs. To follow up on the recommendations of the report, UNDP is providing assistance to Mongolia in developing a long-term national development strategy based on the Millennium Development Goals as well as addressing the country's economic and ecological vulnerabilities. Furthermore, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and UNDP have been engaged in assisting Mongolia to build technical and human capacity for disaster management.

* A/61/150.

06-43595 (E) 070806

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I. Introduction

1. By its resolution 59/73 of 3 December 2004, entitled "Mongolia's international security and nuclear-weapon-free status", the General Assembly invited Member States to continue to cooperate with Mongolia in taking the necessary measures to consolidate and strengthen Mongolia's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, the inviolability of its borders, its independent foreign policy, its economic security, and its ecological balance, as well as its nuclear-weapon-free status. It requested the Secretary-General and relevant United Nations bodies to continue to provide assistance to Mongolia in taking the aforementioned necessary measures. It also requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its sixty-first session on the implementation of the resolution. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request.

II. Activities related to Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status

2. Since the submission of the last report of the Secretary-General on this subject (A/59/364), the United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs, through its Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific, continued to provide assistance to Mongolia in taking the necessary measures to consolidate and strengthen Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status. The Centre organized two meetings (on 17 February and on 13 June 2006) of a consultative group of United Nations departments, programmes, funds and agencies to follow up on the two studies conducted by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on Mongolia's economic and ecological vulnerabilities and human security; exchange information on each other's activities aimed at implementing General Assembly resolution 59/73; and discuss the preparation of the 2006 report of the Secretary-General on the subject. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Department of Political Affairs, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UNDP, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and representatives of Mongolia attended the meetings.

3. Mongolia has continued vigorously to pursue international recognition and institutionalization of its nuclear-weapon-free status by working to establish an international norm on the status. The emergence of such a norm can be seen from the continued references to the Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status at the bilateral, multilateral and international levels, which represents a tangible indication of its growing international recognition. Documents containing references supporting Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status include:

- Declaration of the Conference of States Parties and Signatories to Treaties that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones, held in Mexico City from 26 to 28 April 2005 ("We express our recognition and full support of Mongolia's international nuclear-weapon-free status.").
- Joint Statement by Mongolia and China, Beijing, 29 November 2005 ("The two sides viewed that Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status would contribute to strengthening regional stability. The Chinese side expressed its support for Mongolia's endeavours to institutionalize that status.").

- Joint Statement by Mongolia and the Republic of Korea, Ulaanbaatar, 9 May 2006 ("President Roh expressed the Republic of Korea's support for Mongolia's endeavours to institutionalize its nuclear-weapon-free status at the international level, as an important measure of strengthening the non-proliferation regime and contributing to confidence-building measures in North-east Asia and beyond.").

- Final Document of the Ministerial Meeting of the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement, held in Putrajaya, Malaysia, from 27 to 30 May 2006 ("The Ministers believed that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones created by the Treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok and Pelindaba and Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status are positive steps and important measures towards strengthening global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.").

4. Mongolia also continued to pursue the implementation of its domestic legislation on its nuclear-weapon-free status. In this connection, Mongolia established in May 2006 an inter-ministerial working group to review the progress achieved in the implementation of the Law of Mongolia on its nuclear-weapon-free status and resolution 19 of the State Great Khural (Mongolian Parliament) on measures to be taken in connection with the adoption of the Law. The working group comprised representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Justice and Home Affairs, Ministry of Fuel and Energy, Ministry of Nature and Environment, Ministry of Defense, Nuclear Energy Commission, State Specialized Inspection Agency, National Emergency Management Agency, General Intelligence Authority, Customs General Authority and Blue Banner, a non-governmental organization (NGO).

5. In its report, the working group found that Mongolia's endeavours to implement article 4.2 of the Law, which stipulates that "transportation through the territory of Mongolia of nuclear weapons, parts or components thereof, as well as of nuclear waste or any other nuclear material designed or produced for weapons purposes shall be prohibited", have been hampered by a shortage of trained personnel and the necessary equipment. The working group, therefore, advised that Mongolia should seek assistance from the international community in the following areas: provision of up-to-date, highly sensitive detection equipment, portable detection instruments and X-ray equipment to screen cargo; upgrading the database on cross-border movements; training of customs and border patrol officers in areas such as export controls, biological and related security standards and the prosecution of groups and individuals engaged in terrorist activities involving weapons of mass destruction.

III. Non-nuclear aspects of Mongolia's international security

6. The English and Mongolian versions of the report entitled "Economic and Ecological Vulnerabilities and Human Security in Mongolia", prepared by UNDP in collaboration with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and UNEP, have been published and widely distributed and are also available on the UNDP Mongolia website.

7. The findings of the report have been discussed in various forums in Mongolia, such as at the launch of the 2005 Human Development Report on Trade, Aid and

Security, and at a special meeting organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with relevant Government ministries and agencies, NGOs, United Nations agencies and the donor community.

8. The findings and recommendations of the report have been incorporated into the United Nations common country assessment for the period from 2007 to 2011 and in all five of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (2007-2011) outcomes and related outputs addressing all forms of vulnerabilities in Mongolia.

9. To follow up on the recommendations of the report, UNDP is currently supporting the Government in developing a long-term national development strategy, based on the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), aimed at systematically addressing all the MDGs, including the Goals related to the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, ensuring environmental sustainability and developing a global partnership for development. UNDP will also help the Government to mobilize and align foreign aid to meet specific MDG targets of Mongolia that include economic and ecological vulnerability issues. The long-term strategy will become the basis for Mongolia's annual and medium-term plans and budgets.

Economic vulnerabilities and human security in Mongolia

10. To address Mongolia's economic vulnerabilities, UNDP, in partnership with relevant Government agencies of Mongolia, has provided support to the following projects:

- An integrated programme entitled "Enterprise Mongolia" was launched in 2005, focusing largely on the rural area and aimed at developing capacity for entrepreneurship, innovation, access to microfinance, product development, marketing, networking and policy reforms (Partner agency: Ministry of Trade and Industry).
- A project to promote trade for human development and enhancement of Mongolia's trade negotiating capacity was launched in 2005, which includes analysis of trade and its impact on human development; capacity to negotiate better terms and reduce trade deficits; and promoting Mongolia's networking capacity with other landlocked countries (Partner agency: Ministry of Trade and Industry).
- Through the Urban Poverty Pilot Project UNDP is supporting capacity development for participatory governance and community empowerment in order to improve service delivery in the "ger" areas of Ulaanbataar City (Partner agency: Municipality of Ulaanbataar and Ministry of Social Welfare and Labour).

Ecological vulnerabilities and human security in Mongolia

11. To address Mongolia's ecological vulnerabilities UNDP provided the following specific support:

- Three projects to protect biodiversity and engendered species in the Eastern Steppes, Great Gobi and Altai-Sayan regions, including regional cooperation

with China and Kazakhstan in the Altai region (Partner agency: Ministry of Nature and Environment).

- Project to improve sustainable grasslands management and the livelihoods of herders (Partner agency: Ministry of Food and Agriculture).
- Project to improve energy-efficient housing, using alternative methods of insulation (Partner agency: Ministry of Urban Development and Construction).
- Project to build technical and human capacities for disaster management at the national and local levels. In addition, UNDP facilitated the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination mission of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to assess disaster preparedness capacity and monitor progress on recommendations. A working group was established within the National Emergency Management Agency of Mongolia in August 2005 to develop a National Framework of Action (2005-2015) to strengthen Mongolia's disaster preparedness and response capacity (Partner agency: National Emergency Management Agency).
- United Nations joint policy analysis of the access of poor population to water and sanitation in Mongolia, followed by two United Nations joint missions to advise on a strategy for a United Nations joint programme on water and sanitation.
- Preparatory assistance to assess and identify entry points for addressing issues of land degradation and desertification.

IV. Conclusion

12. The increased references to Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status, at the bilateral, multilateral and international levels, are evidence of its growing international recognition. In this connection, the United Nations has continued to extend its assistance to Mongolia for the promotion of its international security and its nuclear-weapon-free status. Furthermore, the United Nations system as a whole in Mongolia will continue to assist Mongolia in coping with economic and ecological vulnerabilities, especially with regard to follow-up on the recommendations contained in the report on Mongolia's economic and ecological vulnerabilities. The Secretary-General hopes that the assistance provided by the United Nations will contribute to achieving sustainable development and balanced growth in Mongolia during the current period of political and economic transition, reinforcing Mongolia's efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

United Nations A/61/165

General Assembly

Distr.: General
19 July 2006

Original: English

Sixty-first session
Item 49 of the provisional agenda*
Information and communication technologies for development

Communication for development programmes in the United Nations system

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General hereby transmits the report of the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization submitted in accordance with General Assembly resolution 50/130.

* A/61/150.

06-43625 (E) 110806

Report of the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 50/130, including the recommendations of the ninth Inter-Agency Round Table on Communication for Development

Summary

The present report is prepared by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and is being submitted to the General Assembly at the sixty-first session pursuant to its resolution 50/130 of 20 December 1995.

The text presents the engagement of United Nations organizations in the implementation of communication for development and inter-agency collaborative mechanisms for effective and integrated follow-up of related actions. Nine United Nations system agencies, funds and programmes contributed to the review of the existing coordination arrangements following discussions at the ninth United Nations Inter-Agency Round Table on Communication for Development organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (Rome, 6 to 9 September 2004). The Round Table incorporated the experience and views of bilateral and multilateral donors, foundations, development agencies, non-governmental organizations, academia and experts.

The Round Table reiterated that communication for development is critical to the success of the Millennium Development Goals and acknowledged the vital role of the independent and pluralistic media in that process.

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I. Ninth Inter-Agency Round Table on Communication for Development (Rome, 6-9 September 2004)

1. The ninth Inter-Agency Round Table on Communication for Development focused on three specific thematic areas: communication for natural resource management; communication for isolated and marginalized groups; and communication in research, extension and education.

2. Today, the importance of communication in development is acknowledged. It has moved from a focus on information dissemination to one on community participation. Many national and international initiatives acknowledge that the Millennium Development Goals cannot be achieved without good communication and recognize that new strategies and tools must be developed.

3. There have been many global changes since the eighth Round Table, and the ninth Round Table began by looking at the many challenges faced by the world today. These include the rapid spread of globalization and the spread of information and communications technologies (ICTs); the increasing divide between rich and poor; the changing nature of the nation-state; the changing nature of the private sector; ecological pressure; the decentralization of services; the explosion of media; and the emergence of new social actors.

4. The ninth Round Table noted a number of principles shared and agreed on by all participants. These all start from the belief that communication for sustainable development is about people, who are the drivers of their own development. Further, communication for development is a horizontal, two-way process that is about people coming together to identify problems, agree on visions for desirable futures, and empower the poorest. It is about the co-creation and sharing of knowledge. It respects the local context, values and culture.

5. A number of new initiatives on communication for sustainable development were presented and noted, including the proposed 2006 World Congress on Communication for Development. The Round Table established the basis for a working group/network to foster global partnerships on communication for development and established a Plan of Action to be facilitated and monitored through the mechanism of the working group.

6. The Round Table came up with a series of recommendations and a Declaration, which are presented below (see chap. XII).

II. Communication for development in the current context

7. Wide-ranging initiatives and partnerships, including the diffusion of ICTs, have contributed to advancing communication for development. In this connection, State expenditures are increasing for ICT deployment to underserved areas in Africa and the Asia-Pacific region, and development cooperation is contributing to public access of online information on education, training, agriculture, and health care.

8. New opportunities in the effective use of information and communication technologies have led to international discussions about digital and information gaps and the related social and economic differences between industrial and developing nations and within countries. The Action Plan adopted by the World Summit on the

Information Society and the facilitating role assigned to different United Nations organizations may strengthen linkages between communication for development and the use of ICTs.

9. The World Electronic Media Forum II, organized within the framework of the World Summit on the Information Society (November 2005, Tunis), emphasized the importance of the media in the information society particularly in promoting the use of traditional and new media to foster universal access to information, culture and knowledge for all people, especially vulnerable populations and populations in developing countries and using, inter alia, radio and television as educational and learning tools. The Forum reiterated the necessity of an independent, pluralistic and diverse media; freedom of information; use and treatment of information in accordance with the highest ethical and professional standards; the necessity of reducing international imbalances affecting the media, particularly as regards infrastructure, technical resources and the development of human skills.

10. As community media centres expand their networks in the innovative use of old and new communication technologies, there is also growing demand for the media's function in producing, gathering, checking and distributing diverse news and content. Equally, it is essential to ensure that enabling legal and regulatory frameworks are in place to encourage community media and to guarantee the independence and pluralism of the media.

11. The organizations of the United Nations system are active in providing policy advice on the formulation and implementation of national communication and e-strategies, regulatory reform, institutional development and on programmes and projects to improve connectivity, capacity and local content development.

12. Despite the interactive potential of new media technologies, dominant configurations tend to follow a broadcast model of one to many. Interactivity is rarely explored innovatively and two-way flows of information are rarely promoted.

13. Access to information via new technologies does not necessarily assume effective use, and delivery of information alone does not mean that people are informed in any meaningful way. Information needs to be transformed into knowledge in the local context and in local languages.

14. Integration of information and communication technologies into communities and people's engagement with those technologies require the development of a new media literacy if the objective is to provide not only access, but also the ability to analyse, critically evaluate, and use ICTs and the information and knowledge it can carry, along with the ability to create content.

15. These efforts and related policy advice need to be more effectively integrated, however, into the broader development agenda using the Millennium Development Goals as a solid foundation for moving towards a more cohesive approach to development and poverty eradication particularly within the United Nations Development Assistance Framework.

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III. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

16. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) joins those organizations that highlight support for a free and independent media as the cornerstone for successful poverty eradication as well as for meeting the Millennium Development Goals. The recognition and protection of human rights forms the core of the United Nations system and as such, UNESCO bases its activities within a human rights framework.

17. The main orientations of the UNESCO communication for development policy in the last biennium have been in line with the following strategic objectives: (i) promoting the free flow of ideas and universal access to information; (ii) promoting the expression of pluralism and cultural diversity in the media and world information networks; and (iii) access for all to information and communication technologies, especially in the public domain.

Supporting development of communication media

18. The UNESCO International Programme for the Development of Communication strengthens communication media in developing countries by supporting the development of a free and pluralistic media, building investigative capacities through human resource development, and supporting the development of community radio to enhance people's voice and participation. In the period 2004-2006, the Programme supported 159 media projects in 80 developing countries.

19. Training of journalists, building the capacities of training institutions, training of trainers, development of training material, and training on specific subject matters are among the capacity-building areas to which UNESCO renders its support. The organization is currently working with partners to hold the first World Journalism Education Congress in 2007.

20. The role of editorially independent public service broadcasting as a gateway to information and knowledge was also promoted during the biennium, in cooperation with major broadcasting unions.

21. As a continued follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development, strengthening the capacities of communication professionals to produce and disseminate development messages on the Millennium Development Goals and related issues has been a key focus.

Fostering actions to reduce the digital divide and promote social inclusion

22. After the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society, UNESCO implemented relevant sections of the Geneva Declaration of Principles and Action Plan[1] and positioned itself as a key organization in preparation for the second phase (Tunis, 2005). The consistency of the UNESCO key message "towards knowledge societies" with its four underlying principles — freedom of expression,

[1] See A/C.2/59/3, annex.

universal access to information and knowledge, promotion of cultural diversity and equal access to quality education — helped to transform the focus of the technologies debate to its utility for knowledge creation and sharing. The second phase of the World Summit increased the role of UNESCO as a key partner and facilitator in 8 out of 11 World Summit action lines, either solely or jointly with other United Nations system agencies, mainly the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

23. Within its unique mandate to promote the "free flow of ideas by word and image", UNESCO is committed to follow up the World Summit Action Line C9 on the media and to promote and integrate communication for development in the follow-up action.

24. The introduction of community multimedia centres as a model for effective community access and use of information has been widely acknowledged and taken up by United Nations system agencies and other partnerships.

25. Over 50 pilot community multimedia centres were created and supported in 15 countries and scaling up of the centres was initiated in three African countries (Mali, Mozambique and Senegal) as a test bed for wider provision of access to ICTs in marginalized communities.

26. ICT-based distance learning was enhanced through partnerships established with Microsoft and Intel for teacher training; collaboration in support of scientific information established with Alcatel, World Space and IBM for the benefit of scientific research institutions for example in South-East Europe. The cooperation agreement with Microsoft has resulted in (i) the establishment of a fully operational Regional ICT Resource Centre for Youth in Tunisia; and (ii) the setting up of an Internet-based global collaboration space for "Communities of Practice", known as UNESCO Knowledge Communities. Microsoft and Intel are also contributing to a multipartner project to develop a UNESCO universal teacher training ICT syllabus.

Promoting the expression of cultural and linguistic diversity through communication and information

27. Based on the principles set forth in the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, actions involved (a) sensitization of decision makers to encourage diversified content in media and global information networks; (b) training of communication and information professionals to produce quality content; and (c) supporting innovative local content productions and their dissemination at the international level.

28. Quality content production is promoted utilizing both traditional and new media and through these means international public access to local content and endogenous programmes is increased enhancing the flow of intercultural information from South to South and from South to North.

Promoting freedom of expression and the independence and pluralism of media

29. A correlation between freedom of expression and the eradication of poverty was the main theme of World Press Freedom Day 2006, which emphasized that (a) media freedom and access to information play a key role in facilitating local participation and empowerment of the poor; and (b) freedom of expression is the core human right in a rights-based approach to poverty reduction serving to trigger and catalyse the realization of all other basic human rights.

30. The political right to freedom of expression and the social right to poverty alleviation are both fundamental rights. The work of UNESCO in linking free press, access to information and poverty alleviation is a vital contribution to discussions on development.

31. The celebration of World Press Freedom Day (3 May) and the award of the UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize are prominent in raising public awareness of press freedom as a fundamental right and in giving high visibility to the efforts of UNESCO in this respect.

32. The comprehensive strategy developed with partner organizations to secure a holistic and coherent approach to media assistance in conflict and post-conflict areas has been put into practice in Afghanistan, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Liberia, Rwanda and Palestine.

33. UNESCO accords importance to the application of specific standards such as public service broadcasting, people's democratic participation in the media, media pluralism, and the establishment of related legal regulatory frameworks in the reconstruction phase.

34. The UNESCO approach to communication for development is holistic and encompasses capacity-building and policy advocacy at national levels, as well as functioning as a laboratory of ideas at the international level.

IV. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Follow-up on joint actions proposed at the ninth United Nations Inter-Agency Round Table on Communication for Development

35. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in collaboration with the World Bank and the online network, The Communication Initiative (www.comminit.com), is co-organizing the First World Congress on Communication for Development, to be held in Rome at FAO headquarters, from 25 to 27 October 2006.

36. The main objective of the Congress is to demonstrate that communication for development is essential for meeting today's most pressing development challenges and, as such, should be fully integrated in development policy and practice. It will also promote mainstreaming of communication into national plans and policies, partnerships with United Nations system agencies and other donor organizations.

37. FAO is responsible for the stream on "Communication for Sustainable Development", which will be structured around three communication themes: (a) communication for food security, rural development and livelihoods strategies; (b) communication for natural resources management and the environment, and (c) communication for poverty reduction and equity issues.

38. A fourth theme on "regional perspectives" will provide the results of seven regional studies and consultations in a compendium entitled "Regional perspectives in communication for development", which presents the views and proposals of local practitioners and institutions for mainstreaming communication for development into sustainable development policies.

Capacity-building and collaboration with bilateral partners

39. In 2004, FAO and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), through a joint workshop on effective communication between research, extension and farmers, identified and analysed communication gaps and developed appropriate communication strategies to engage experts in a dialogue on communication between national and international research, extension services and their clientele.

Field support to development programmes and projects

40. The FAO approach to communication for development is mainly implemented through field programmes, which provide technical advice and assistance to member countries on (a) communication strategy design; (b) formulation of national communication policies and systems; and (c) training and field workshops in communication skills, methodologies and media, and particularly in support of the Special Programme for Food Security, and of natural resource management, ICTs for development and other FAO priority programmes.

41. Field experiences are documented as case studies, publications, and lessons learned in communication approaches and tools.

"Bridging the Rural Digital Divide", or ICTs for rural development

42. The application of new ICTs such as the Internet and mobile telephones has become a crucial force in world economic and social development and can significantly assist countries in addressing major obstacles in agriculture and rural development.

43. The FAO global programme, entitled "Bridging the rural digital divide", contributed to the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society and demonstrated the application of participatory communication approaches alongside convergence of new information and communication technologies with traditional media such as rural radio.

44. Special attention has been given to the application of ICTs in research and extension networks, improvement of advisory services, as well as participatory processes of involving local communities in the development policies.

45. The benefits of ICTs have been harnessed to create "Communities of Practices" in agriculture and rural development using different approaches such as virtual extension and research communication networks, farm radio networks and rural communication networks in Bhutan, Costa Rica, Egypt, Namibia and Uganda.

46. Local appropriation and ownership of new communication tools by rural peoples has strengthened a series of communication centres and networks and resulted in the publication of methodological frameworks, distance learning tools (Information Management Resource Kit) and guidelines.

47. FAO works on ICTs for rural development in collaboration with other agencies such as the World Bank, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Technical Centre for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation, the International Institute for Communication for Development and the Global Knowledge Partnership.

Natural resource management, indigenous people and HIV/AIDS

48. In Cambodia and Bolivia, FAO support to communication for natural resource management and indigenous peoples has led to the creation of virtual communities and the publication of various resource books.

49. Participatory rural communication approaches have been applied in Uganda in relation to the prevention of HIV and AIDS through livelihoods communication projects to ensure that those affected by HIV/AIDS were at the centre of communication activities and processes.

50. In collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), an HIV/AIDS sensitization and behavioural change communication project is being implemented in five provinces of Cameroon.

Rural radio

51. Training of rural radio broadcasters in four African countries and a workshop on the concept of rural radio for decision makers in Southern and Eastern Africa have contributed to the capacity of rural radio broadcasters in Africa.

52. Partnership with non-governmental organizations such as the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters has enabled the production, adaptation, and distribution of fact sheets on seeds production, market prices, post-harvest management and animal production to the rural radio network members of the Association's Simbani News Agency in Africa.

Policies and strategies

53. FAO has been supporting the countries of the West African Economic and Monetary Union in drafting a strategy to extend legal texts on phytosanitarian, zoo

sanitarian, and food safety measures. The National Communication Policy of Mali has been updated and a national communication policy for Senegal has been drafted. Environmental communication strategies are being processed in Mali and Burkina Faso.

Communication in emergencies

54. In response to the avian influenza epidemic in Asia and Africa, and locust outbreaks in Africa, the Near East and Southern Europe, FAO mobilized resources and provided technical support to communicate emergency information and programmes based on community-led and participatory approaches.

55. During the period 2003-2005, when 13 million hectares of land were treated with pesticides to combat an upsurge of the desert locust in 26 countries, FAO carried out preventive information and communication activities including safe use of pesticides and long-term environmental monitoring.

V. World Bank

56. The Development Communication Division of the World Bank has grown in number from a group of 5 professionals in 1998 to 20 in 2006, demonstrating the consideration gained for the discipline of communication for development within the World Bank.

57. The growing relevance of communication for development has been also reflected in the broadening role of World Bank concepts and practices that are fast adopting communication, not only as dissemination of information and diffusion of innovation, but also as a means to build trust, compare perceptions, assess political risks and define or validate the objectives of any intervention.

58. Mainstreaming communication for development in policies and operations is demonstrated by an overarching goal that introduces a communication-based assessment methodology during the initial assessment of development initiatives.

59. The term "communication-based" intends to emphasize that this assessment is not just about communication needs, but rather the use of communication to explore and investigate all relevant issues for the effective design of development projects and programmes.

60. Communication-based assessment (a) facilitates the exchange of perceptions and knowledge among relevant stakeholders; (b) assists in assessing any situation, minimizing political risks and the likelihood of conflicts; (c) builds consensus on key priorities; and (d) helps to define objectives that are well understood and agreed upon by stakeholders.

61. Based on the communication-based assessment methodology, the Development Communication Division presented the concept of the first World Congress on Communication for Development at the ninth Round Table as an initiative aimed at promoting the mainstreaming of communication for development in institutional policies.

62. The first World Congress on Communication for Development (a) invites direct interaction between United Nations organizations, non-governmental organizations, academia, and policymakers to present and discuss the value added and challenges of communication for development at a local and global level; (b) intends to address the effectiveness of communication for development by recognizing the application of proven theoretical models and by linking academia with practitioners in the presence of decision makers; (c) will further promote mainstreaming of communication for development in the implementation of institutional policies on development.

63. Communication is given an increasingly important role in virtually all development initiatives, including those closely related to good governance and transparency.

64. The ultimate goal of development is to instil "change for the better" by involving people's participation, which by far is a challenging and complex process. This process demands (a) a systematic reflection of the theoretical and practical underpinnings of communication for development; and (b) knowledge of theoretical models as well as effective, practical experiences that can increase the value added of communication for development in meeting the challenges of human development.

VI. International Fund for Agricultural Development

65. The International Fund for Agricultural Development is the only international institution dedicated exclusively to eradicating poverty in rural areas of developing countries. Communication processes are increasingly recognized by IFAD as powerful tools to facilitate sustainable rural development and poverty eradication.

66. In particular, communication for development is fundamental to strengthening the capacity of rural poor people to lead their own development and overcome poverty.

67. Communication for development has supported and strengthened many IFAD-funded projects. The institution is now moving, however, towards a more systematic and strategic approach to using communication in addressing development challenges.

World Congress on Communication for Development

68. IFAD is a member of the Advisory Body to the World Congress on Communication for Development and will: (a) recommend appropriate policymakers and decision makers to participate in the Congress Policymaker's Forum; (b) provide input to the study on mainstreaming communication for development, which is being undertaken prior to the Congress; (c) advise on the post-Congress advocacy strategy and the mainstreaming agenda; and (d) contribute to following up on the recommendations coming out of the Congress, including the possible creation of a global alliance on communication for development.

69. IFAD is working with FAO to organize part of the thematic stream on communication and sustainable development, especially with regard to communication, food security, and rural development and livelihood strategies.

World Summit on the Information Society

70. IFAD participated in both phases of the World Summit on the Information Society, hosting side events at the Geneva and Tunis summits that focused on the role of ICTs in rural poverty eradication.

71. In Geneva in 2003, IFAD hosted a discussion on what ICTs, as a tool rather than as a solution, could do for the world's 800 million extremely poor people who live in rural areas.

72. During the Tunis summit in 2005, IFAD organized a panel discussion on the theme entitled "Eradicating rural poverty by connecting rural communities", to demonstrate the real-time lessons emerging from an IFAD initiative in the United Republic of Tanzania, the First Mile Project, and to discuss their implications regionally and globally. The panel discussion linked these lessons to key issues highlighted by the 2003 side event, including: (a) the importance of relevant local content; (b) how local people are using and adapting ICTs in innovative ways to their own circumstances and needs; (c) convergence and complementarities of traditional and new ICTs; and (d) the importance of an enabling policy and regulatory environment.

First Mile Project

73. The First Mile Project is linked to the Tanzanian Government Agricultural Marketing Systems Development Programme and is supported by the Government of Switzerland. The project aims to determine whether access to ICTs can help rural poor people communicate and negotiate with others along the market chain to build fairer and more efficient market relationships.

74. The IFAD Communications Division is using a multimedia approach to document the emerging lessons, results and impact of the First Mile Project. People involved in the project are being interviewed at different times during the life of the project and their evolving stories will help to illustrate impact.

Rural Knowledge Network in East Africa

75. Building on experiences with the Linking Local Learners platform and with Farmer Field Schools in Kenya, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda, IFAD will partner with FAO to develop a rural knowledge network in East Africa. The main objective of the network is to initiate a people-centred knowledge management process that is built on an understanding of farmers' needs, shapes existing technical information to respond to their requirements and delivers knowledge in a form they can understand. The network will emphasize access to and control over information, so that the impact, relevance and accuracy of information are the results of a decentralized, participatory process. IFAD has worked with FAO on Farmer Field Schools in East Africa since 1998.

Framework for a rural communication programme in West and Central Africa

76. IFAD is developing a framework and action plan for a communication for development programme in West and Central Africa based on an analysis of challenges and opportunities for communication in the region, and drawing on experiences that have emerged from IFAD-sponsored rural communication activities in the region.

Rural poverty portal

77. IFAD is building the rural poverty portal (www.ruralpovertyportal.org), which will enhance information and knowledge-sharing by positioning the fight to eradicate rural poverty as a global priority. The portal is an Internet-based tool and service that connects communities of people with the information and knowledge they need to eradicate rural poverty.

VII. International Telecommunication Union

The changing telecommunications environment

78. The 2005 Millennium Summit recognizes the role of science and technology, including ICTs in achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

79. The growth of ICTs will open new opportunities in communication for development. The impact of the mobile phone has led to measurable economic development in developing countries.

80. The number of Internet users continues to grow, reaching around 842 million worldwide at the end of 2004, compared with 605 million at the end of 2002. Broadband access technologies are extending access and advanced wireless broadband technologies offer great promise to enable developing countries to achieve greater Internet penetration and information access.

World Summit on the Information Society

81. ITU was the lead organizing United Nations system agency for both phases of the World Summit. Through the World Summit, ITU provided leadership within the United Nations system on ICT matters and for implementation of the Summit outcomes.

82. Paragraph 64 of the Geneva Declaration of Principles[1] specifically states that the core competencies of ITU are of crucial importance in building the Information Society.

83. The Tunis Agenda for the Information Society[7] reiterates the important role played by ITU, and designates ITU as the sole facilitator/moderator for 2 of a total of 11 action lines (C2, on infrastructure, and C5, on security), and joint moderator for an additional 6 action lines.

84. On 27 March 2006, the General Assembly adopted resolution 60/252, in which it endorsed the Tunis Commitment and the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society adopted by the Summit at its second phase, among other decisions and actions.

85. ITU maintains a database of stocktaking of World Summit-related activities undertaken by stakeholders, as well as contributing its own activities to the stocktaking database. A "Golden Book" of stakeholder commitments and initiatives and a web portal of ICT Success Stories have been published.

United Nations system initiatives on information and communication technologies

86. Along with UNESCO and UNDP, ITU is playing a lead role in the multi-stakeholder implementation of the World Summit Plan of Action, and will serve as rotating chair of the United Nations Group on the Information Society established by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination at its spring 2006 meeting.

87. ITU will also play the lead facilitation role for the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit under action line C2 (infrastructure).

Facilitating cooperative participation to bridge the international digital divide

88. The ICT application projects of ITU delivering services to developing countries in sectors such as health, education, internet, commerce, agriculture and government services have benefited more than 100 developing countries. Some 60 partnership agreements have been signed and implemented by ITU with regional and international organizations and in cooperation with Governments and the private sector.

89. Most ITU activities focused on specific country or multi-country requests for assistance on a wide range of topics from strengthening regulatory agencies to assistance in telecommunication policy and competition law and technical assistance in network engineering, spectrum management and digital technology deployment, distance-learning, telemedicine.

90. The ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau has established partnership agreements to create tools and training material and guidelines for the development of capabilities in the field of telecommunications science and technology in developing countries, with organizations, companies and other United Nations system agencies such as UNESCO, UNEP, the United Nations Institute for Training

[7] See A/60/687, annex.

and Research, the European Community, the European Space Agency and the World Health Organization.

91. There are a number of ongoing projects in e-government, e-learning, e-security and shared access to ICTs in various countries, including a joint project between ITU, UPU and other partners to bring the benefits of digital technology to the population in rural and remote areas using post offices as vehicles.

Disseminate information and know-how to assist developing countries

92. In direct response to the Geneva Plan of Action of the World Summit, in a cooperative effort ITU has launched the Digital Opportunity Index to measure countries' progress and prospects in building an information society.

93. Human resource management and development activities in developing countries strengthen human, institutional and organizational capacity. These activities particularly target the needs of policymakers and regulators at the government level as well as senior executives and managers of telecom/ICT operators and service providers trained through different online and face-to-face programmes through centres of excellence.

94. Gender and youth programmes have initiated activities with the purpose of disseminating information and providing training. An innovative initiative included assistance to the Centre of Young Software Developers in Uzbekistan.

VIII. United Nations Development Programme

95. Since the convening of the ninth Round Table, UNDP has restructured its Communications Office and has integrated communications for development as one of its key services to programme countries. UNDP seeks to strengthen communications as a tool for development, providing strategic communications services for programme delivery, training and support for the media and for communications professionals, and information services for the public.

96. The involvement of UNDP in communication for development takes on many different forms, including the design and dissemination of communication tools for development practitioners, the mobilization of artists, celebrities and other communicators for achieving development goals, public information and civic education campaigns in electoral processes, training of journalists, broadening access to communications technologies and using these technologies to facilitate development, and enhancing the dynamic process of participatory development.

Participatory development and voter education

97. The UNDP Civil Society Organizations Division, with the Global Environmental Facility Small Grants Programme (a trust fund with World Bank and UNEP) and the Human Rights Strengthening Programme (a joint programme with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)), in 2004 commissioned *Insights into Participatory Video: a handbook for the field*.

The handbook, published in February 2006, gives practical advice on key games and activities, editing footage, technical advice, and equipment requirements, and provides examples from Ghana, India and Turkmenistan.

98. UNDP worked with the Liberian National Democratic Institute and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems to train community-based voter educators from civil society organizations and contracted local organizations for an intensive voter education programme. The UNDP Country Office and Communications Office collaborate in election reporting workshops for Liberian journalists.

99. UNDP also worked with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the Interim Afghan Electoral Commission in the Voter Registration Project and the Afghan Elections Project. Voter registration was promoted and facilitated through public information and civic education campaigns, using face-to-face approaches, broadcast media, community mobilization events, and civil society partnerships.

HIV/AIDS: Breaking the Silence

100. The first-ever UNDP programme for the Arab States on HIV/AIDS was launched in September 2002 with the aim of "breaking the silence" by raising awareness and engaging Arab leaders from different sectors of society. UNDP collaborated with non-governmental organizations, Governments, and agencies including UNICEF, the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the International Labour Organization and OHCHR.

101. Activities included a discussion seminar for university students in the Syrian Arab Republic and a historic workshop with leading Egyptian religious figures in collaboration with UNAIDS and national organizations. In 2004, an 18-minute documentary with personal testimonies by people living with HIV/AIDS and exclusive interviews with prominent individuals in Arab society was widely broadcast on television networks, with CD-ROMs and videos distributed to target audiences.

102. Under the title "Africa 2015", UNDP partnered with UNAIDS and UNICEF and involved celebrities and political leaders to promote HIV/AIDS prevention. UNDP organized consultations with African artists, who performed and released the song *We are the Drums* on the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty in 2004. Nine individual songs have since been produced in an album.

Media training

103. In May 2006, the Media Forum in Kigali was organized, alongside the Sixth African Governance Forum, for journalists to discuss media participation for better governance. In June 2005, the UNDP Programme on Governance in the Arab Region organized regional media training and knowledge management workshops on gender and citizenship.

104. The Support to the Establishment of the Afghan Legislature project conducted a seminar for journalists in March 2006 on the legislature and importance of public participation.

105. In February 2006, UNDP established a Media Centre to support the General Elections Commission in Indonesia.

106. The UNDP Small Arms Control Programme hosted a media-training workshop in Liberia in December 2005, to promote awareness and sensitization on the negative impact of small arms proliferation.

Governance: fighting corruption

107. UNDP is undertaking the training of national journalists in reporting on governance and corruption issues and the drafting of anti-corruption legislation in Asia.

108. The Regional Governance Programme has produced two television public service announcements conveying how corruption affects everyone and takes away important services at the community level, and warning against petty corruption. The aim is to voiceover and broadcast the announcements on as many national stations as possible.

Influencing policy at the global, regional and national levels

109. The national report in 2004, entitled "Interculturalism and Globalization: Bolivia's Potential", prompted a vigorous media debate and was used to formulate the Government national information and communication strategy.

Communications technologies to facilitate development

110. UNDP has emphasized the critical role that ICT can play in development. Recent projects include a pilot programme of e-government in Kenya, with communities in eight different districts gaining access to government information and other strategic resources; and in India "eJustice", a portal offering legal information and support, in collaboration with the Centre for Good Governance and the National Institute for Smart Governance.

111. UNDP participated in global forums, including the United Nations Information and Communication Technologies Task Force and the World Summit on the Information Society.

IX. United Nations Population Fund

112. Since its inception, UNFPA has used communication as a critical strategy and tool in its programming process to improve quality of life through broadened informed choices of individuals, couples, families, and communities.

113. In accordance with the Plan of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Millennium Development Goals, UNFPA ensures the success of its communication efforts to advance public knowledge, understanding, and commitment to child spacing, population, and reproductive health by influencing and promoting policies and dialogue.

114. In recent years UNFPA made a paradigm shift in communication activities, from information provision and education style of activities, including broad awareness-raising campaigns, to more focused communication activities that work towards influencing attitudes and changing behaviour.

115. Communication is an integral component of UNFPA programmes and makes use of mass media, interpersonal communication, folk and other types of popular media.

116. Efforts emphasize the use of modern information and communication technologies such as the Internet, mobile phones and other audio-video technologies to create awareness and to promote population and reproductive health issues.

117. More targeted communication interventions have given people greater insight into their personal situations and strengthened knowledge and skills sharing for sustained behaviour and practices.

118. Communication of appropriate information, counselling, and to promote safe, healthy and responsible behaviours has contributed immensely in improving maternal and child health and the prevention of HIV and AIDS.

119. Communication is key for access and appropriate utilization of health services that have been established to improve reproductive health.

Capacity-building

120. UNFPA has utilized existing national, regional and international technical resources to build communication competencies at national levels.

121. Advocacy and behavioural change communication training have been provided to local reproductive health personnel and community members, particularly women.

122. Training has been provided in the development of strategies and techniques. Communication training has been integrated in the curricula of schools of public health and medicine, social worker training schools, schools of communication and journalism, and teacher training institutions.

123. National population communication networks are being strengthened, especially for journalists and health educators.

Research

124. UNFPA encourages the collection of baseline data for assessing the need for specific communication interventions and their impact, which includes analyses of communication and media audiences; socio-cultural research for the development of culturally sensitive programmes and strategies, and evaluation of such interventions.

Support to campaigns, communication materials production, and equipment

125. Mass media campaigns and the production and distribution of audio-visual, electronic, and print materials are prepared for selected audiences.

126. Support is provided to non-governmental, youth, and women's organizations, to produce informative, entertaining, educational and promotional materials.

127. UNFPA provides assistance for the design and development of training materials and equipment, low-cost, folk, and mass media materials, and the expertise needed to produce them.

128. UNFPA supports the planning and implementation of mass media campaigns, linkages to community media broadcasting, participatory community mobilization activities such as street theatre, and innovative use of new communication and information technologies such as telephone hotlines, and Internet-based services.

National comprehensive communication strategies

129. UNFPA encourages and supports the development of comprehensive, country-specific national advocacy and behavioural change communication strategies that promote individual choice in the area of sexual and reproductive health. These strategies provide a framework for all inputs and are important for harmonizing national and donor efforts in behavioural change communication, including the framework of United Nations common programming processes.

X. United Nations Environment Programme

130. The UNEP working motto, or slogan is "environment for development" and many of its operational programmes and activities have been reoriented in line with this aim.

131. The Millennium Development Goals, in particular Goal 7, entitled "Ensure Environmental Sustainability", as well as the outcome of the 2005 World Summit, other agreements, decisions and resolutions give UNEP the mandate to pursue an approach that can encompass opportunities in the area of communication for development.

132. UNEP was identified by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board High Level Committee on Programmes as a member to the World Summit "e-environment" follow-up plan of action.

Capacity-building for the media

133. As one example of UNEP efforts to build the capacity of media on environmental issues, a thematic workshop focusing on the links between poverty and environment was held in early 2006 for members of the African Network of Environmental Journalists, and hosted by the Government of Mauritania.

Raising environmental awareness

134. *Poverty and Environment Times* is a publication of UNEP collaborating centre GRID-Arendal (Global Research Information Database, Arendal, Norway) that aims to raise awareness on links between poverty and environment in an easy-to-read package. Four editions have been published so far, the latest focusing on the importance of the environment for the Millennium Development Goals. That edition was launched at the World Summit 2005. UNEP also published special editions of its flagship *Our Planet* magazine for the World Summit, as well as targeted publications to children and youth as part of its TUNZA Youth strategy. The UNEP website is increasingly being improved to raise awareness and understanding on environment and development issues.

World Congress on Communication for Development

135. UNEP is represented in the Advisory Board of the World Congress on Communication for Development.

World Environment Day and other United Nations observances

136. In addition to the activities each year around the globe on World Environment Day on 5 June, The International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (17 October) was observed by UNEP for the first time in 2005. The UNEP Poverty and Environment Unit is approaching UNDP to discuss potential for joint observance of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.

eCARE: a practical case study working with partners

137. With funding from the United Nations Foundation, UNEP launched e-Commerce and Renewable Energy (eCARE) in December 2005, as a 3-year initiative in partnership with Telecom Management Partner, a subsidiary of Telenor. eCARE seeks to deliver commercial and social services using ICTs and clean energy systems in rural communities of Ghana through an enterprise-centred approach. The project establishes rural business centres, each equipped with three phones, a computer and printer, and a solar system for eCARE power. Entrepreneurs are selected from rural areas, taken through training, and make a down payment on a rural business centre which they operate. When the loan is repaid, the entrepreneur becomes the owner of the equipment. eCARE will establish over 200 rural business centres over three years all over Ghana.

138. Today six eCARE centres are in successful operation in Ghana. By the close of March 2006, a total of 25 eCARE centres will be in operation, benefiting more than 150,000 people. Rural to peri-urban residents will then have access to affordable telecommunication services in areas where this was previously lacking. eCARE is bridging not only the "energy divide" but also the "digital divide". By the end of 2008 eCARE will cover all regions of Ghana with at least 200 centres offering renewably powered telecom services to more than 1 million Ghanaians.

XI. United Nations Children's Fund

139. In 2005, a significant part of UNICEF communications activities focused on reaching the general public and civil society with advocacy messages about the Millennium Development Goals and the ways in which achieving results for children advanced a country's efforts towards achieving the Goals.

140. UNICEF used the World Wide Web, multimedia publications, media coverage and celebrity ambassadors to reach a broader and more diverse audience, thereby engaging a wide range of partners in development, some for the first time.

141. In its programme communications, UNICEF supports development goals by presenting results-oriented messages, grounded in research and developed within environmental contexts. There is a strong emphasis on processes including monitoring, evaluation and documentation. Underlying all its interventions, UNICEF strongly advocates for the human rights perspective that focuses on inclusion and agency self-reliance. Ranging from policy advocacy to mass communication and social mobilization, UNICEF programme communication focuses on influencing attitudes and behaviours to contribute to positive social change. Areas where UNICEF has been working intensively over the past two years have included polio and malaria eradication, routine immunization and more recently, avian influenza.

142. The use of new and traditional media by UNICEF contributes to a highly effective advocacy effort ensuring large scale information outreach about the situation of children around the world in relation to the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

143. High-visibility initiatives to achieve youth participation and enable their voice has been marked by activities around the International Children's Day of Broadcasting and the related award given in partnership with the International Academy of Television Arts & Sciences.

144. UNICEF produces essential data and information which are required for strategic action in communication for development. Flagship publications such as *The State of the World's Children* report and *Progress for Children* provide detailed analysis concerning the plight of children worldwide and the actions required internationally to improve their situation. Additional reports include *Gender Achievements and Progress in Education* and several on HIV and AIDS, including *Children: The missing face of AIDS*, *Girls, HIV/AIDS and Education* and *Monitoring and evaluation of the national response to children orphaned and made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS*.

145. Advocacy campaigns are supported with publications on child survival including *Vaccines: Handled with Care*; *Building Trust in Immunization*; *Eliminating Maternal and Neonatal Tetanus*; and *Immunization Summary 2005*. Multimedia *Child Alert* products are also being introduced to highlight the situation of children in chronic and "silent" emergencies, with the first two reports focusing on Darfur and Haiti, respectively.

146. Strategic partnerships are established, including with media organizations, to promote issues related to the Millennium Development Goals.

147. In response to emergencies, strategic messaging has been strengthened through innovative applications such as the global correspondent system, a digital and web-based news distributor that ensures the delivery of multimedia content in record time.

148. UNICEF has met success in utilizing new information technologies including the Really Simple Syndication news feed and converged radio and podcasts to provide broadcast-downloadable programmes through its website. *The News Market* reaches more than 6,000 broadcasters globally and has increased its digital distribution by more than 250 per cent from 2004, with an annual total of 559,000 clips downloaded in 2005, compared to 158,000 in 2004. More than 700 audio-video products, a dozen Flash interactives and thousands of news pages are produced every year on the UNICEF website.

XII. Conclusions and recommendations[1]

149. Communication for development is about people, who are the drivers of their own development. It is a two-way process — with people coming together to identify problems, agree on visions for desirable futures, create solutions and empower the poorest. Communication for development is an approach of equal importance to all stakeholders. It is about the co-creation and sharing of knowledge and as such respects indigenous knowledge and culture. The local context is key. Within that perspective, it is clear that communication for development is critical to the success of the Millennium Development Goals.

150. In the recent past, communication for development has faced a number of key challenges: (a) a new and rapidly changing environment owing to the challenges of globalization, privatization, ecological pressure, the decentralization of services, the explosion of media and the emergence of new social actors; (b) the rapid expansion of ICTs, but the continuing gap between knowledge and information, and limited participation of the poorest in the development process; (c) finding how communication fits into local and national development processes and policies; and (d) how to demonstrate the added value and impact of communication for development and including these in government, international and donor policies. All of the above have brought new opportunities but have also led to a marginalization of poverty-related issues. In order to counter this, collaboration and coordination among communication for development initiatives is a priority.

151. **The ninth Round Table called for: (a) scaling up successful examples of communication for development initiatives to improve practice and policy at every level; (b) policies and resources to be properly enabled by concerted actions, and adequate resources, both human and material giving consideration to longer timescales; (c) implementation of national legal frameworks favouring the right to free expression, emergence of free and pluralistic information systems, and recognizing the role of community media in providing access to communication for the isolated and marginalized; (d) research addressing sustained process and outcome using a participatory approach, a shared framework between development agencies, local stakeholders, and communities**

[1] Conclusions and recommendations are based on the outcome of the ninth Round Table and its Declaration.

in project design and implementation; (e) participatory baseline and communication needs assessments that include self-evaluation by communities themselves to feed back at the policy level; (f) training initiatives focused on collaborative learning, encouraging experiential, value-based, culturally sensitive training in participatory communication for development and fostering a community of practice across the regions; (g) building alliances and effective linkages for a voice to the poorest and with the ability to engage and influence policy and decision-making on sustainable development, and to that end, fostering local, national and regional communication for development processes; (h) information and consultation mechanisms set up to ensure coordinated action among United Nations system agencies and other stakeholders at the international level.

152. The ninth Round Table also proposed general recommendations, namely that: (a) communication for development advocates and practitioners should commit to ensure that communications is recognized as a central component in all development initiatives; (b) donors and development agencies should set up well-resourced communication for development units to implement and promote initiatives; (c) Governments, donors and development agencies should incorporate communication needs assessment in any development initiative (and eventually devote a specific percentage of the budget for this purpose (e.g., 0.5-1 per cent); (d) initiatives such as the World Congress on Communication for Development are encouraged to build a concrete evidence base for decision-makers in donor, development and governments agencies; (e) the United Nations should analyse communication experiences, suggest improvements and develop a common approach to communication for development; and (f) training initiatives should be fostered in developing countries building on existing experiences; programmes, materials and systems should be developed and shared; and participatory development communication should be integrated into existing development curricula.

United Nations A/61/166

General Assembly

Distr.: General
19 July 2006

Original: English

Sixty-first session
Item 115 of the provisional agenda*
Programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007

Construction of additional conference facilities at the Vienna International Centre

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

In section VI of its resolution 59/276 of 23 December 2004, the General Assembly approved the participation of the United Nations, along with the other organizations located in the Vienna International Centre, in the arrangements for a proposed new conference facility within the boundaries of the Centre.

The present report has been prepared pursuant to section VI of General Assembly resolution 59/276, in which the Assembly entrusted the Secretary-General to determine the cost-sharing arrangements between the United Nations and the three other organizations located at the Vienna International Centre and to report thereon to the Assembly for its review and decision. In addition, information is provided on the progress in the project implementation since the issuance of the note by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/59/23).

* A/61/150.

06-43631 (E) 100806

I. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, in section VI of its resolution 59/276 of 23 December 2004, took note with appreciation of the proposal of the Government of Austria to construct a new conference facility within the boundaries of the Vienna International Centre; approved the participation of the United Nations, along with the other organizations located in the Centre, in the arrangements for the proposed new conference facility on the terms proposed by the Secretary-General in his note (A/C.5/59/23); entrusted the Secretary-General to determine, in cooperation with the other three organizations located at the Centre, the cost-sharing arrangements for potential future costs arising from the project within the amount indicated in his note, on the understanding that the related financial requirements would be dealt with in the context of the proposed programme budget for the respective bienniums, and to report thereon to the Assembly for its review and decision; and requested the Secretary-General to report on the progress in the project implementation to the Assembly at its sixty-first session.

2. The present report has been prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 59/276, section VI. In addition, the report provides information on the progress in the project implementation since the issuance of the note by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/59/23).

II. Project costs and cost-sharing arrangement

3. As indicated in the note by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/59/23, paras. 7 and 8), the agreement with the Government of the host country to provide a new conference facility was finalized in the form of a memorandum of understanding signed on 18 October 2004, which set a ceiling for the project at €52.5 million, of which the United Nations and the three other organizations located at the Vienna International Centre would collectively contribute €2.5 million; moreover, the exact share of each of the organizations had been preliminarily agreed upon.

4. Subsequently, after a review of various cost-sharing scenarios, the participating organizations agreed to adopt the preliminarily agreed cost-sharing ratios, which were based on the projected utilization of the new conference facilities, to determine their share of the total amount to be contributed. The United Nations share, based on projected utilization of the new facility, is 4 per cent. The share of the €2.5 million accounted for by each of the participating organizations is indicated in the table.

Cost-sharing arrangement

Participating organization	*Share (percentage)*	*Contribution (euros)*
International Atomic Energy Agency	80.0	2 000 000
Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization	13.0	325 000
United Nations Office at Vienna	4.0	100 000
United Nations Industrial Development Organization	3.0	75 000
Total	**100.0**	**2 500 000**

5. Effective 2010, the present cost-sharing principle, which is based on actual usage, would be applied to the maintenance and operation costs of the new conference facility. From 2008 to 2010 the new facility would serve as "swing space" while asbestos is being removed from the existing conference building. During that period, the organizations would incur no additional maintenance and operation costs relating to the new conference facility.

6. The financial requirements related to paragraphs 4 and 5 above, excluding the removal of asbestos, will be dealt with in the context of the proposed programme budget for the respective biennium. The cost of asbestos removal in the present conference centre will be covered by the host country under the provision of the host country agreement, whereby the Government of Austria is responsible for major work on the building.

III. Status of development of the project

7. Following the approval by the General Assembly for the participation of the United Nations, along with the other organizations located in the Vienna International Centre, in the arrangements for the proposed new conference facility, various working groups were established. The working groups were comprised of representatives of the Government of the host country as well as consultants and experts from the organizations located in the Centre. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) was designated as the focal point to represent the interests of the organizations in the realization of the new conference building, as UNIDO is currently responsible for the operation and maintenance of all existing buildings in the Centre.

8. The working groups have met regularly to discuss the technical aspects of the construction of the new conference facility, such as design, foundation, electronics, air conditioning, and conference technologies, as well as aspects related to the future operation and maintenance of the new conference facility. In the meantime, the participating organizations have reached agreement on the cost-sharing arrangement.

9. As advised by the Austrian authorities, a building permit for the new conference facility was obtained in July 2006 and preparatory work on infrastructure for the construction is under way. Furthermore, it is anticipated that

the original timeline and costs for the construction and delivery of the new conference facility will be respected. The new conference facility should therefore be available in 2008.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

10. **The agreement with the Government of the host country to provide a new conference facility sets a ceiling for the project at €52.5 million, of which the United Nations and the three other organizations located at the Vienna International Centre would collectively contribute €2.5 million, payable in the biennium 2008-2009.**

11. **The agreement on the cost-sharing arrangement has been reached with the participating organizations. The United Nations share of the costs for the construction of the new conference facility amounts to €100,000. That amount, which would be payable in 2008, will be presented to the General Assembly in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009.**

12. **The maintenance and operation costs of the new conference facility would be shared using the present cost-sharing principle, which is based on actual usage. The related financial requirements will be dealt with in conjunction with other common support costs in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium.**

13. **The General Assembly may wish to take note of the present report.**

United Nations A/61/167

General Assembly

Distr.: General
19 July 2006

Original: English

Sixty-first session
Item 59 (d) of the provisional agenda*
Social development: follow-up to the International Year of Older Persons: Second World Assembly on Ageing

Follow-up to the Second World Assembly on Ageing

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report highlights national efforts aimed at developing or strengthening national capacity on ageing, and analyses the status of international cooperation with respect to assisting Member States in their efforts to develop their capacity to implement the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing. In its conclusion, the report provides a number of recommendations for consideration by the General Assembly.

* A/61/150

06-43637 (E) 110806

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I. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution 60/135 of 16 December 2005, entitled "Follow-up to the Second World Assembly on Ageing", stressed the need for additional capacity-building at the national level in order to promote and facilitate implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002.[1] In the same resolution, the Assembly called upon Governments to consult and utilize the Research Agenda on Ageing for the Twenty-first Century, adopted by the Valencia Forum in April 2002, as a tool for strengthening national capacity on ageing for the implementation, review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action.

2. Member States have taken a number of actions to enhance their capacities to achieve the objectives of the Madrid Plan of Action, including institutional strengthening and legislative action to create an enabling environment. The road map for the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action (A/58/160, sect. III) of which the General Assembly took note in its resolution 58/134 of 22 December 2003 had identified national capacity-building and mainstreaming of ageing into national development agendas, as two essential facets of the implementation process. The present report, prepared in response to Assembly resolution 60/135, highlights various efforts undertaken at the national and international levels in relation to the capacity-building goals pertinent to the Madrid Plan of Action.

3. Apart from discussing some basic elements of the capacity-building process, the report addresses specific national actions needed to implement the Madrid Plan of Action and highlights international cooperation efforts in this regard. The conclusion presents recommendations for consideration by the General Assembly.

II. Capacity-building for implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing: conceptual framework

4. National capacity to implement policies and programmes on ageing is determined by a set of factors originating from various spheres of the policy environment and interacting at different stages of the policy process. Capacity-building is a multifaceted process geared towards strengthening the ability of people, institutions and societies to "perform functions, solve problems and set and achieve objectives".[2] Capacity-building is also a means of creating a political, socio-economic and legal environment conducive to social progress. Democracy, the rule of law, respect for all human rights, fundamental freedoms and good governance at all levels allow the citizenry, including older persons, to articulate their concerns and effectively claim their rights. Effective systems of management, appropriate organizational skills, and accountable institutions of government are essential for the conduct of the implementation and monitoring process.

5. The accurate assessment of a country's capacity for implementing the Madrid Plan of Action can present a challenge, as the existence of national policies and

[1] *Report of the Second World Assembly on Ageing, Madrid, 8-12 April 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.IV.4), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[2] See Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, Carlos Lopes and Khalid Malik, eds., *Capacity for Development: New Solutions to Old Problems* (London and New York, Earthscan and United Nations Development Programme, 2002), p. 8.

plans on ageing by themselves are not always strong indicators of the ability of a country to actually carry out the initiatives and achieve the results envisioned in the Madrid Plan of Action. Nonetheless, a number of elements can be relied upon to help guide an assessment of national capacity on ageing, including: the ability of a country to set clear goals and develop a national plan of action on ageing that corresponds with the declaration and objectives agreed to in the Madrid Plan of Action; the political will of a country to implement ageing programmes, as seen, for example, in the creation of institutions dedicated to ageing issues; the extent to which a national Government actively engages in and promotes partnerships with other stakeholders, including the private sector, non-governmental organizations, families and associations of older persons; the degree to which a country invests in human resources — in personnel to implement and oversee policies and programmes on ageing as well as in the education and training of older persons themselves to help keep them vital and engaged; the efforts that a country makes to find and secure resources — both nationally and internationally — to carry out ageing programmes; and the commitment that a country makes to improving the quality of its research, data and analysis on ageing issues.

6. The essential elements of national capacity development that Governments have addressed or may wish to address in designing, implementing and monitoring their implementation strategies within the context of the Madrid Plan of Action are listed below. They have been selected in light of the recommendations of the Madrid Plan of Action and include: (a) institutional infrastructure; (b) human resources; (c) mobilization of financial resources; (d) research, data collection and analysis; and (e) a sound policy process, including the use of mainstreaming. All of the above elements of national capacity are complementary, and should be seen in a holistic manner.

7. The establishment of agencies and national committees on ageing is an essential first step in creating an *institutional infrastructure* for promoting follow-up to the Madrid Plan of Action. Cooperation and partnerships between government representatives and all major stakeholders are crucial for the success of their work. In addition, a specifically appointed focal point on ageing within the government, designated at the central, provincial and local levels, is particularly important in respect of providing the necessary political and administrative weight to the ageing agenda. Non-governmental organizations have an important role in supporting Governments in their assessment, implementation and follow-up efforts. Strengthening organizations representing older persons can increase the capacity of civil society organizations to support the policy process and work more effectively with other stakeholders.

8. *Human resource development* is the key element of any capacity-building effort. It encompasses investment in training for the acquisition of skills in crucial areas of expertise such as policy design, data collection and analysis, gerontology and geriatric health care. Universities and other education establishments could pay greater attention to these areas in the courses and programmes that they offer to their students. The educational and training activities may be complemented by volunteering done by older persons. Volunteering contributes to social capital and ensures that the abilities and skills of older persons are used effectively, thus enhancing national capacity.

9. *Mobilization of financial resources, including budget allocations* earmarked for programmes and policies related to older persons, is a clear expression of the political will to address ageing issues. Intergenerational equity in public spending and allocation of funds are necessary considerations. Properly assessing the effectiveness of ageing-related social spending, and placing it within the context of relevant national and international experience, can improve national capacity in this important area of policymaking.

10. The conceptualization and design of new policies are best achieved when based on empirical evidence that is reliable, representative and valid. Better *research and data collection* — addressing both quantitative and qualitative aspects — will provide the necessary information for new policy interventions. The participation of older persons in this process may enhance the potential for obtaining reliable data through censuses and surveys, as well as through qualitative, participatory methods of data collection. Achieving the capacity to collect, disaggregate and analyse age-specific data remains an acute challenge in many countries.

11. Enhancing and deepening research on all aspects of ageing, including the study of its economic and social consequences, are vital for building capacity for evidence-based policymaking. Increasing funding and developing human resources are crucial elements in strengthening research capacity. Countries that lack domestic resources in this area could seek partnerships with universities and research centres abroad, apply to international donors for project funding or increase training of domestic staff. The Research Agenda on Ageing for the 21st century could serve as a topical guide for policy-related research activities.[5]

12. *Mainstreaming*, as a policy tool, should integrate ageing issues systematically into current and future development agendas, including legal frameworks, work programmes and budgets. Mainstreaming may be seen as a strategy and a process as well as a multidimensional effort that should lead to better social integration of older persons and to the inclusion of ageing concerns into all aspects of social, political, economic and cultural life. Mainstreaming ageing and the concerns of older persons into national development frameworks and poverty eradication strategies is identified in the Madrid Plan of Action as a necessary first step in its successful implementation.

13. Systematic, independent and impartial monitoring of progress in implementation is essential. It can be conducted by the Government or by autonomous institutions, as recommended in the Madrid Plan of Action. The first five-year review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action will commence in 2007 and will be conducted by and large through a participatory bottom-up approach that will be based on the opinions of older persons.[6] The adoption of a bottom-up participatory approach on a global scale for conducting the review and appraisal of a major international policy document like the Madrid Plan of Action is without precedent and represents a substantive challenge. Additional efforts may be needed to build or enhance pertinent elements of national implementation mechanisms, including strengthening research and data collection. To assist Governments in

[5] More details on the Research Agenda on Ageing for the 21st Century are available from http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/ageing/ageing-agenda.htm.

[6] See Commission for Social Development resolution 44/1 on the modalities for the first review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action (*Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2006, Supplement No. 8* (E/2006/26), chap. I, sect. C).

organizing and conducting their review and appraisal exercises, the United Nations Secretariat has prepared the publication entitled *Guidelines for Review and Appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing: Bottom-up Participatory Approach*. More conventional approaches to collecting and analysing information will also be utilized. To support national efforts, a set of indicators has been developed and could be used during the review and appraisal process.[7]

III. National implementation actions

14. Since the Madrid Plan of Action is not a legally binding document, there is no mandatory procedure through which Member States would regularly inform the United Nations Secretariat about their implementation efforts. Thus, in the absence of comprehensive information about national implementation, a thorough assessment of national capacity on ageing is not possible at this point. It is hoped that this gap will be bridged during the review and appraisal exercise set to take place in 2007 and 2008. Based on the information available to the Secretariat, this report will give merely a snapshot of national capacity to implement the Madrid Plan of Action, highlighting both the achievements and the challenges faced by a cross section of Member States.

A. Institutional infrastructure

15. National capacity to implement the Madrid Plan of Action is closely tied to the institutional framework in place to ensure follow-up of policies and programmes on ageing. For example, countries that have designated agencies or ministries on ageing, and sufficient financial and human resources to carry out initiatives geared towards older persons, tend to demonstrate the greatest capacity to implement the Madrid Plan of Action. Several countries have fully established government offices on ageing at the ministerial or similar level, such as the Department of Health and Ageing (Australia); the Division of Ageing and Seniors of the Public Health Agency (Canada); the National Committee on Ageing (China); the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (Germany); and the Administration on Ageing (United States of America).

16. In the face of competing demands and obligations and often insufficient human and financial resources, many countries have placed focal points on ageing within various ministries dealing with social issues. The success of government focal points rests on their capacity to work across a spectrum of various government offices and mainstream ageing issues into other relevant policy processes, as well as to collaborate with a variety of stakeholders. This requires that focal points enjoy political support at the highest level.

17. A number of countries have established independent advisory bodies, such as committees or commissions composed of academics, the private sector and non-governmental organizations, to address ageing issues and the concerns of older persons. These advisory bodies are typically charged with the task of assisting or advising Governments in developing and implementing policies and programmes.

[7] Indicators proposed are available from http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/ageing/documents/MIPAA_annex_ii_list.pdf.

and can serve as watchdogs for government policymaking, since top-down approaches often overlook the needs of older persons. Advisory bodies incorporate opinions and facilitate close and regular monitoring of policy implementation at the local or community level. Equally important, such bodies can evaluate and assess the impact of newly proposed policies and suggest possible changes.

18. Advisory bodies currently exist in a variety of countries such as Austria, Chile, Guatemala, India and Mexico. Austria, for example, has established an independent council of senior citizens with rights and responsibilities similar to those of a chamber of commerce, which has become a major contributor to discussions on national policy on ageing. Chile has created a National Service for Older Persons (SENAMA) which includes an advisory committee composed of representatives of older persons' organizations, academia and institutions working with older persons. Guatemala has a National Council for Protection of the Aged which consults with civil society and organizations of older persons in its policymaking. In India, a National Council of Older Persons was formed, with 25 per cent of its members drawn from the government and 75 per cent comprising, inter alia, academics and retired persons from both rural and urban communities. The Government accepts the Council as a watchdog agency designed to monitor policy on ageing. In Mexico, the National Institute of Older Persons (INAPAM) requires that senior citizens be included in advisory bodies concerned with relevant issues. A common feature of all of these advisory bodies is that they enjoy independence and can therefore play a key role in monitoring the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action.

19. In the Latin American and Caribbean region, various countries or areas have initiated strategies involving non-governmental organizations in implementing the Madrid Plan of Action. The National Council of Older Persons (CONAPAM) in Costa Rica, for instance, is coordinating efforts with organizations of older persons to help them implement a communication and awareness-raising campaign for all ages. Similarly, Anguilla and Belize have embarked on producing a series of radio and TV programmes to draw attention to ageing issues. Other countries in the Caribbean, such as Guyana and Saint Kitts and Nevis, are promoting special days for intergenerational activities. Joint education campaigns are also being held throughout the region, addressing such issues as the ageing process, rights of older persons and elder abuse. Of particular interest is the campaign by the Latin American Association of Publicity Agencies (ALAP), in conjunction with the Inter-American Development Bank, to promote a new culture of ageing, stressing the value of older persons to society.

20. Several regional initiatives have promoted partnerships between the major stakeholders in the process of implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) has made an effort to improve the quality of consultations between government officials and civil society and has facilitated multi-stakeholder dialogues. To this end, ESCAP has made use of photo displays and video productions, involving the media, the private sector and highly visible individuals.

21. In the European Union (EU), evidence of a successful partnership between the government and civil society can be seen in the outcome of the spring summit 2006 held in Brussels. AGE — The European Older People's Platform, a group of 148 organizations representing 22 million older people in Europe, campaigned with other non-governmental organizations to bring the social dimension back into the

Lisbon Strategy. Their influence was notable, for instance, in the recommendations on employment of older persons mentioned in the Presidency Conclusions of the Brussels European Council (23 and 24 March 2006).

B. Human resources

22. Human resources needed to deal effectively with ageing issues range from health-care personnel who are properly trained to care for an ageing population, to actuarial and budgetary specialists who can ensure that pension and social security schemes are sufficiently funded, to community service providers who can make sure that the needs of older persons are met within their communities. The human potential of older persons themselves also needs to be nurtured and developed, as people can continue to make valuable contributions to their communities as they age.

23. The capacity of countries to meet the health-care needs of their ageing populations varies considerably depending to their level of economic development. The World Health Organization (WHO) warns that there is a critical shortage of health workers, including doctors, nurses and laboratory technicians, in developing countries. According to *The World Health Report 2006: Working Together for Health*,[6] at least 1.3 billion people around the world have no access to basic health care often owing to a deficit of health workers. Africa, for example, accounts for 11 per cent of the world population but has only 3 per cent of all health workers, despite the fact that it carries 25 per cent of the disease burden. WHO estimates that an additional 4 million health workers are needed to provide essential health care in the 57 countries facing the greatest shortages in health personnel. Compounding the problem is the "brain drain" of skilled health professionals from developing to developed countries: about 1 in 4 doctors trained in Africa is currently working in Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries. The combination of these factors cause many developing countries to be poorly prepared to meet the challenges of the epidemiological transition from an acute to a chronic disease burden.

24. Many countries, however, are making a concerted effort to improve their capacity for meeting the human resources needs of an ageing society. In Chile, for example, the Government will train 570 health professionals for specialization in geriatrics. They will then serve in 103 doctors' offices across the country. A school will also be developed to provide health training to leaders of clubs and community unions of older persons.

25. Ukraine established in July 2005 a State Educational Geriatric Centre, thereby providing another example of human resources development. The Centre aims to develop and implement educational programmes for medical and social workers, as well as volunteers, in the field of care for older persons. Professionals and volunteers will be trained concurrently, so that they can share their diverse experiences in the care of older persons.

[6] Geneva, WHO, 2006.

C. Financial resources

26. The Madrid Plan of Action emphasized that in the national implementation process, programme innovation, mobilization of financial resources and the development of necessary human resources would be undertaken simultaneously (para. 116). In many developing countries, additional financial resources are required to support the inclusion of older persons in national development frameworks, poverty eradication strategies, and emergency relief operations. Fund allocations are also needed in developing countries and countries with economies in transition to provide microcredit and other forms of financial support for small-scale intergenerational enterprises that can help older persons become or remain self-sufficient.

27. Mobilization of financial resources for programmes and policies dealing with older persons, such as social security, pension plans and health care, is strongest in high-income countries. The concern of a growing number of high-income countries is not how to mobilize more resources, but how to control costs for pensions and health-care plans at a time when the active working population is shrinking in proportion to the number of retired persons.

28. The Directorate General for Economic and Financial Affairs of the European Commission organized a conference in March 2006 on the economic and budgetary impact of ageing, which brought together politicians, academics, national authorities, the European Commission and international organizations to discuss the impact of ageing on pensions and health-care systems in Europe. With the ageing of the population in Europe, combined with the tendency towards early retirement, much attention has been drawn to the costs of maintaining existing pension and health plans for older persons.

29. Although the lack of financial resources is typically cited as the main stumbling block to effective implementation of programmes to support older persons, the experiences of various countries have shown that the costs of social pension programmes are not as prohibitive as initially anticipated. In South Africa, for example, pensions reach 1.9 million older people at a cost of 1.4 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP). The investment has been worth the cost because the pensions have proved to be an effective way of targeting aid to the poorest people and their dependants, as the pension is estimated to have reduced the number of people living on less than $1 per day by 5 per cent (2.24 million people). Likewise in Brazil, pensions reach 5.3 million poor older people at a cost of 1 per cent of GDP. Having a pensioner in the family can reduce a household's probability of becoming poor by 21 per cent. Other countries have had similar experiences: the cost of implementing a large-scale social pension scheme was less than 2 per cent of GDP in Namibia; and administration costs were found to account for only 2-3 per cent of benefit payments in Botswana and Mauritius.[7]

30. Chile has taken direct action to improve the quality of services for older persons through the establishment of a National Fund for Older Adults. The Fund will make available $1.25 million to legally established organizations of older persons to enable them to carry out social and development programmes aimed at

[7] Information on pension programmes in Africa is available from the HelpAge International website (http://www.helpage.org (accessed March 2006).

assisting those over age 60. The Fund is intended to complement the newly created free health-care and social pension programme [8]

31. Furthermore, it is important not to overlook the benefits that pension plans can generate for the local economy, as recipients spend their pension money on needed goods and services, such as food, water, health care and education. Evidence shows that pensions can increase the share of the poorest 5 per cent of the population in national consumption, as pensions have been demonstrated to increase the income of this group by 100 per cent in Brazil and by 50 per cent in South Africa.[9] When perceived as an investment in the well-being of older persons, their families and communities, pensions may be said to represent a wise use of financial resources. Although much attention has been directed to the costs associated with an ageing population, it is important to keep in mind the economic, as well as the non-economic contributions that older persons make to the societies in which they live.

D. Research, data collection and analysis

32. There is a persistent call for more and better data to assist in planning, evaluation and monitoring of programmes and policies on ageing. That global poverty data are not disaggregated by age is a continuing shortcoming, making it difficult to accurately determine the pervasiveness of poverty among older persons. Moreover, the absence of such data forestalls efforts to evaluate progress in meeting the Millennium Development Goals, particularly with regard to halving extreme poverty and hunger among older persons. The ongoing difficulties in data-collection efforts, particularly in developing countries, remain an obstacle to gaining accurate and timely information about the status of older persons throughout the world. Nevertheless, countries in different regions are demonstrating a growing capacity to gain accurate and timely information on the ageing process as evidenced by the convening of scientific meetings and the publication of research studies.

33. In Africa, research on ageing remains very limited. It originates mostly from universities, in particular from the field of the medical sciences. The Government of South Africa in its report to the Second World Assembly on Ageing in 2002 acknowledged the dire need for research to be extended to encompass the social aspects of ageing and for government to develop a research programme that was relevant to national needs. Data disaggregated by age remain rare in African countries. The Asian region also has limited capacity in respect of research and data collection, although signs of progress are evident. In Thailand, for example, the Second National Long-term Plan for Older Persons (2002-2021) includes research strategies to support policy and programme development and to monitor and evaluate the National Plan.

34. The challenges and opportunities of ageing European societies have triggered considerable data collection, research and discussion on the issue, which have improved capacity to develop policies in this area. The European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research, a United Nations-affiliated intergovernmental organization, collaborates with the Austrian Government and the Economic

[8] "Bachelet encabezó llamado a postulacion de fondo para adultos mayores", *El Mostrador*, Chile, 17 de abril, 2006, available from Global Action on Ageing newsletter, April 17-21, 2006.

[9] Information on pension programmes in Africa was derived from the HelpAge International website (March 2006).

Commission for Europe (ECE) secretariat in scientifically and technically assisting governments in monitoring the regional implementation strategy for the Madrid Plan of Action. The European Research Area in Ageing (ERA-AGE), a four-year project funded by the European Commission, aims to promote the development of a European strategy for research on ageing. The Design for Ageing Network was established in 1994 in the Netherlands to act as a Europe-wide forum for exchange of information, ideas and expertise related to ageing, and as a springboard for new collaborations at local, national and international levels.

35. In the Latin American region, a number of countries have built up their capacity to conduct research and analysis on ageing issues. In Argentina, for example, the Programme of Ageing and Society of the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLACSO-Argentina) has begun studying the issue of the ageing workforce, and the Group of Socio-Anthropology of Older Persons and Community Planning of Ageing at the University of Mar del Plata has carried out extensive research on social support networks for older persons. The Centre of Psychogerontology in Colombia has studied ageing from a variety of perspectives and has published a number of books and articles; and in Venezuela, the Unit on Research in Gerontology of the National Experimental University Francisco de Miranda has initiated research on support networks and social policies geared to older persons.

36. The Caribbean subregion recently convened its first Symposium on Ageing in Trinidad and Tobago, with a view to strengthening regional capacities in implementing the Madrid Plan of Action. The symposium was a joint exercise of the Government, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the University of the West Indies and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). The Jamaica campus of the University of the West Indies has established a Centre for Gerontology, and the University of Suriname has undertaken research on the impact of physical activities on the well-being of older persons.

37. Australia has demonstrated a considerable commitment to promoting research and data collection on population ageing. The Department of Health and Ageing has funded or developed scores of research projects, grants and publications on ageing issues, as well as a large number of statistics, geared towards guiding future policy directions in this area.[10] The National Health and Medical Research Council also provides funding to support medical research and training on health issues for people of all ages throughout Australia.

38. In the United States of America, research and analysis on ageing issues are carried out by a wide range of entities, including the government, academia, foundations and non-profit organizations. One such public policy research institute is the National Academy on an Aging Society[11] which conducts research on public policy issues associated with population ageing with the aim of enhancing the quality of debates about the challenges and opportunities inherent in an ageing society. It also serves as the policy arm of the Gerontological Society of America, a professional organization that provides researchers, educators, practitioners and policymakers with the opportunity to integrate basic and applied research on ageing and to use it to improve people's quality of life as they age. There is also a White

[10] http://www.health.gov.au/internet/wcms/Publishing.nsf/Content/Research%20&%20Statistics-1

[11] http://www.agingsociety.org/agingsociety/about/index.html.

House Conference on Aging, last held in 2005, which is convened every 10 years to develop recommendations for the United States Government on issues, policy and research in the field of ageing.

E. Policy development

39. Countries are designing and implementing policies and programmes within a broad framework provided by the Madrid Plan of Action. Many countries have adopted comprehensive national strategies on ageing, including concomitant legislation. Some of these strategies, however, have not necessarily emerged in follow-up to the Madrid Plan of Action but rather reflect long-term efforts to address national priorities in population and individual ageing.

40. Actions on poverty eradication and income security feature most prominently in national implementation actions. The provision of income support to older persons is a fundamental policy requirement. Yet, according to estimates of the International Labour Organization (ILO), only 20 per cent of the world's population has adequate social protection coverage, with the situation even more dire in sub-Saharan Africa, where coverage for old age income protection extends to just 10 per cent of the labour force. Without coverage under contributory old age pensions, a large proportion of the older population in lower-income countries are vulnerable to poverty.

41. Not surprisingly, the highest-income countries — which also happen to be those with the greatest share of their populations over age 60 — are far more likely than lower-income countries to provide their citizens with social protection coverage. Among the 25 EU countries, for example, 21 per cent of their populations are over age 60; in 2001, expenditures on social protection constituted on average 27.3 per cent of each country's GDP. Not only do the countries of EU have the financial capacity to provide social protection coverage, but with 1 of 5 persons over age 60, they also have a large constituency of older persons who regularly exercise their democratic right to ensure that the needs and concerns of older persons are met.

42. By comparison, most countries in sub-Saharan Africa are struggling to acquire both the financial resources and the political will to implement social protection policies. A recent analysis by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) indicates that the cost of providing a universal non-contributory social pension to all older persons in the region would be between 2 and 3 per cent of GDP, an amount rivalling public spending on education and health care in some countries.[9] Given that only 5 per cent of the population in the region is aged 60 years or over, compared with 41 per cent who are under age 15, the relatively low priority given to policies for older persons becomes evident. Their minority status, in terms of numbers, is compounded by the fact that these older persons are less likely to be empowered to draw attention to their concerns. Moreover, since the majority of countries in sub-Saharan Africa are classified as "low-income", the lack of financial resources to establish social pension schemes is an overriding consideration. This

[9] Nanak Kakwani and Kalanidhi Subbarao, "Ageing and poverty in Africa and the role of social pensions", *International Poverty Centre Working Paper*, No. 8 (Brasilia, Brazil, UNDP and International Poverty Centre, August 2005).

could help explain why only four countries in sub-Saharan Africa, namely, Botswana, Mauritius, Namibia and South Africa (three of which are categorized as upper middle-income countries), are known to have universal pension schemes. Nonetheless, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) has called for social protection strategies to be developed by the African Union New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) programme by 2007.[13] Alternatively, some Governments have instituted cash payment programmes targeted to a small number of poor older persons.

43. The development of income support programmes for older persons remains crucial in policy interventions, especially given that 4 of 5 older people living in developing countries have no regular income and approximately 100 million live on less than $1 per day. As a result, a regular non-contributory cash payment in the form of a social pension can be extremely beneficial to older persons, providing them with income to meet their basic daily needs. In recent years, a number of Governments and international agencies have developed an interest in universal non-contributory pensions as an essential part of national social protection programmes.

44. An example of a limited cash programme can be found in Indonesia, where in May 2006, the Government started to provide cash assistance to some 2,500 elderly persons classified as "neglected" in six provinces, including Jakarta. To qualify, people must be over age 60 and poor. If the programme is deemed a success, the Government will extend it to other areas of the country. Although this is an important step, it represents a very small intervention in terms of tackling the problem, as the 2004 census estimates that there are 16 million older persons in the country, of whom 2 million are considered to be neglected and about 4 million vulnerable to neglect.[14]

45. Other approaches to providing income support for older persons include government-sponsored savings plans, intended to encourage people to save for retirement. The Finance Minister of India, for example, announced the introduction of a pension-linked saving scheme in February 2006, in which an individual can save up to 100,000 rupees per year with a rebate in personal taxation.[15]

46. Other countries, particularly those in Eastern Europe and Western Asia, face the dual challenge of supporting a rapidly ageing population and having limited financial resources to meet their needs. Policies directed at older persons have garnered attention in part because the changing demographics demand it, but perhaps more importantly because older persons in these countries tend to be more politically and socially active than members of other age groups. In Kazakhstan, for instance, older persons constitute an active electorate, with 72 per cent of those over age 65 voting in recent elections, compared with just over 50 per cent of those aged 35-40.[16] With a general legislative base in place, including laws on pensions, and

[13] "Social protection for vulnerable older people", available from the HelpAge International website (http://www.helpage.org/Researchandpolicy/Socialprotection/Background), accessed 6 March 2006.

[14] "Cash assistance planned for needy elderly, disabled", *The Jakarta Post*, 15 March 2006.

[15] Muneer Alam, *Ageing in India: Socio-Economic and Health Dimensions*, Institute of Economic Growth, Studies in Economic Development and Planning, No. 66 (Delhi, Academic Foundation, 2006).

[16] "The great generation of Kazakhstan: insight into the future", National Human Development Report for 2005 (Almaty, United Nations Population Fund and United Nations Development Programme, 2005).

social help, an essential foundation for additional work in the area of ageing policy has been created.

47. Aside from developing specific policies on ageing, countries are also placing greater emphasis on mainstreaming ageing issues. Although some progress has been made in mainstreaming policies on ageing into national development frameworks, great challenges remain, particularly with regard to incorporating ageing issues into poverty reduction strategies. Part of the problem stems from the inattention given to ageing issues in the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[17] the Millennium Development Goals and the 2005 World Summit Outcome.[18] These oversights are then carried down to the national level, where older persons are frequently left out of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers consultation process and ageing issues oftentimes are not adequately addressed in national development plans. Nevertheless, some countries have successfully included ageing in their national poverty reduction strategies. For instance, the United Republic of Tanzania recently incorporated several cross-cutting issues pertaining to older persons and ageing in its National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty, which covers the period 2005-2010. Specifically, the strategy aims to explore options for more effective control of malaria through prompt treatment of older persons and to eliminate all forms of barriers to health care for older persons. Lesotho, one of the least developed countries, placed the financing and administration of its universal social pension plan within the remit of its National Vision and Poverty Reduction strategy programme. Several countries with economies in transition, such as Azerbaijan and Bosnia and Herzegovina, have also specifically targets older persons in their Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers.

IV. International cooperation to implement the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing at the national level

48. The Madrid Plan of Action emphasized the need for enhanced and focused international cooperation for its implementation and underlined the importance of the support provided by the international community and international development agencies to organizations that promoted training and capacity-building on ageing in developing countries. In its resolution 44/1, the Commission for Social Development requested the Secretariat "to work with the organizations, organs and bodies of the United Nations system and other interested parties to coordinate efforts in identifying support that could be provided to Governments, upon their request, in undertaking participatory review and appraisal of the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action".[19] The review and appraisal framework envisages a major role for the regional commissions in convening regional review and appraisal activities and the Commission encouraged interested Governments to offer assistance in convening regional review and appraisal events during 2006-2007.

49. The Division for Social Policy and Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat began work on a technical assistance initiative in 2003 to support Member States in implementing the

[17] See General Assembly resolution 55/2.

[18] See General Assembly resolution 60/1.

[19] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2006, Supplement No. 6* (E/2006/26), chap. I, sect. C, resolution 44/1, para. 10.

Madrid Plan of Action. Funding from the Development Account has been made available to expand the Division's work under a "Capacity-building project to integrate older persons in development goals and frameworks through the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing". The overall approach of the project is to promote the integration of an ageing perspective into national development frameworks.

50. Several regional commissions have provided technical support for national implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action. For instance, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) have provided assistance for the developing of national implementation strategies. The current focus of the regional commissions is moving towards building the capacity of Member States in respect of conducting the bottom-up review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action. However, the financial and human resources needed to undertake this work are limited and demand far outstrips available resources. The Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) supports Member States in their efforts to implement the ECE Regional Implementation Strategy. However, owing to lack of resources, direct technical support to Member States for building their capacity on ageing is not available. In the absence of resources, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) are unable to offer support for capacity-building in their Member States.

51. Given the persistent deficit or even complete absence of resources for technical cooperation on ageing in the regional commissions, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat has drafted a funding proposal to offer training at the regional and subregional levels to assist national focal points on ageing in organizing national review and appraisals, and to provide resources for regional review and appraisal conferences where findings of national appraisals could be shared. Donor funding is currently being sought to help, in particular, those regional commissions with no budget to support national review and appraisal activities.

52. In an effort to build capacity on data collection, the United Nations Statistics Division is active in a number of country-level initiatives to improve data collection and analysis. These capacity-building efforts should contribute to the availability of better and more comprehensive data, particularly those that are disaggregated by sex and age. Another sign of progress is that population data will be available for five-year cohorts up to 100 years of age and will also include a new category of 100+ years, in recognition of the increasing longevity of persons throughout the world.

53. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) is actively involved in the formulation of national plans and programmes on ageing, such as the National Plan on Active Ageing in Benin, the National Policy on Older Persons in Guatemala, the National Policy for Older Persons in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, and the National Programme of Action on Ageing in Viet Nam. In Uganda, UNFPA worked closely with the Government to formulate and promulgate a population policy that includes a section on older persons. UNFPA also took part in a policy workshop in 2006 on the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action organized by the Parliament of Ukraine and the United Nations programme on ageing.

54. UNFPA supports projects aimed at strengthening government capacity to formulate and implement evidence-based strategic plans and policies on ageing. In

Benin, the Fund supported the development of a database of census information on older persons and a special census volume on older persons. In China, UNFPA is working with the China National Committee on Ageing and the non-governmental organization HelpAge International to implement a project aimed at formulating policy with special emphasis on active and healthy ageing. UNFPA also provides support for a participatory review and appraisal of the implementation of the existing Chinese Law on Protection of the Rights and Interests of the Elderly which is scheduled to be revised in 2007.

55. In Malaysia, UNFPA helps to review existing legal provisions in order to make recommendations aimed at encouraging increased employment of older persons. In Thailand, UNFPA commissioned a study to examine how HIV/AIDS impacts on the economic, social, health and emotional status of older persons and supports a project on HIV/AIDS and older persons that seeks to induce the National AIDS Prevention and Control Body to include the needs and concerns of older people affected by HIV/AIDS. A study was also undertaken to identify emerging issues arising out of population ageing in Thailand and to review the national polices, plans and services for older people and their implementation.

56. UNFPA also funded the collection of data on the health care of older women in Uganda and provided substantial support to the Uganda 2002 population and housing census which included information on the socio-economic situation of older persons. In Ukraine, UNFPA conducted a situational analysis entitled "Population Ageing in Ukraine: some demographic, socio-economic and medicare issues", which provided recommendations for effective policies to respond to the challenges of population ageing. In Viet Nam, UNFPA works to enhance knowledge of population ageing issues and policy responses among policymakers and government leaders and to strengthen the policy framework relating to care and interventions.

57. Training is one of the major priorities in UNFPA support for developing national capacity on ageing. At the global level, UNFPA is working with the International Institute on Ageing in Malta to create a training programme for senior government officials designed to strengthen their capacity to formulate, implement, monitor and evaluate policies and programmes on ageing. UNFPA also sponsored a number of government officials and UNFPA staff in order that they might attend training courses in population ageing at the Institute. In Guatemala, UNFPA supported the training of those who care for older persons and the creation of day-care centres for older persons. Working with the Uganda Reach the Aged Association and the African Regional Development Centre of HelpAge International, UNFPA funded the training of policymakers and UNFPA staff in the area of population ageing.

58. Through its initiative that comprises a series of Country Reviews of Employment Policy (CREP), the International Labour Organization (ILO) analyses the country situation, including issues related to ageing, and provides recommendations to individual Member States on how to strengthen their national employment and labour-market policies. For example, the Country Review for Albania contains recommendations concerning older workers that are oriented towards preventing age discrimination, increasing the retirement age, aiding the employability of older persons, and making continued employment attractive for older persons.

59. The work of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) concentrates on empowering older rural persons by promoting their integration and participation in rural development and food security strategies. FAO has undertaken a number of country studies, most recently in Bolivia and Thailand, to improve understanding of rural ageing. The findings of these studies are presented in a series of technical papers. These materials reinforce the capacity of agricultural policymakers to anticipate the effects of rural ageing and put in place the appropriate measures to maximize the opportunities of older rural persons. Most recently, FAO has moved to explore the impact of HIV/AIDS on the older rural persons in sub-Saharan Africa in order to strengthen the capacity of ministries of agriculture to respond to the needs of older persons in HIV/AIDS-affected rural areas. In addition to promoting the well-being of older persons, the technical assistance that FAO provides to Member States promotes policy interventions and legislation that support older persons as contributors to agricultural development.

60. WHO has designed three capacity-building initiatives to strengthen the primary health-care sector as well as the community capacity to deal with ageing issues. The first initiative aims to produce a toolkit with which to make primary health-care services more accessible and responsive to older peoples by sensitizing and educating providers about the specific needs of older persons. Australia, Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, Jamaica, Singapore and Spain participate in this initiative.

61. The second initiative is aimed at producing an "age-friendly cities guideline" for the provision of a framework for policies, services and structures related to the physical and social environment that will support and enable older persons to age actively and participate fully in society. The project design aims for the attainment of broad community participation, including participatory research, with older persons acting as project monitors. Fieldwork will be undertaken in Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Ireland, Jamaica, Japan, Lebanon, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

62. The third initiative will produce a knowledge base to assist policymakers in formulating integrated health and social policies focused on the primary health care system and encompassing the community and family care. Countries from Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America and the Middle East are participating in the project and are paired in a South-to-South exchange of experience and learning. WHO is also working on a number of publications, reports and initiatives aimed at providing information with which to build the capacity of medical personnel and policymakers.

63. The non-governmental organization HelpAge International has been working with Governments to mainstream ageing issues into development strategies. For example, the United Republic of Tanzania office of HelpAge International was instrumental in having older persons included in specific targets in the country's recently revised strategy for growth and reduction of poverty. In Uganda, older persons now feature in national plans on poverty, agriculture and health owing to a cross-ministerial working group facilitated by Uganda Reach the Aged Association, one of the partners of HelpAge International. HelpAge has also been working closely with several Governments, namely those of Albania, Kyrgyzstan, Montenegro, Mozambique and Serbia, on developing national plans of action on ageing.

64. In addition, HelpAge International works in specific thematic areas at the national level to ensure that older persons are included in national policies and programmes. Much of this work involves building the capacity of civil society organizations at the national level to take forward issues of ageing. For instance, partner organizations in Asia are working with older people's associations in Cambodia, Thailand and Viet Nam on issues of support to older carers of victims of HIV/AIDS and AIDS orphans. In addition to supporting older persons in emergency and conflict situations — for example, in Darfur, the Sudan, in drought-stricken Ethiopia, in earthquake-affected Pakistan and in the Indian Ocean region following the Asian tsunami — HelpAge International works with various agencies to ensure that older persons are included in general relief programmes.

65. Another non-governmental organization, the International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics, organizes regular global, regional and national meetings of scientists and practitioners to discuss the most recent research findings and their implications for science and society. Together with the United Nations programme on ageing, the Association conducted a series of regional workshops that helped to identify priorities for research to support the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action in different world regions. The International Research Centre for Healthy Ageing and Longevity, A private sector initiative, was established in 2004 in Sydney, Australia. The Centre's mission is to promote healthy ageing and longevity through interdisciplinary collaboration among the world's leading experts and to disseminate evidence-based knowledge among the nations of the developed and the developing world.

66. Within the United Nations system, a major proportion of current assistance to ageing seems to have focused on the funding of specific, if not discrete, ageing-related activities rather than on an overall and integrated strategy for mainstreaming ageing as called for in the Madrid Plan of Action. In consequence, existing success stories and good practices of mainstreaming ageing into national development frameworks often represent the outcomes of efforts by the non-governmental rather than by the United Nations development community.

67. Nevertheless, there is evidence of recent developments in the international assistance area that may promote a more holistic framework within which to integrate ageing and national development. For instance, the donor and international development community has begun to shift its funding approach from group- to theme-based targeting. This approach has the potential to maximize the use of resources by consolidating the issues of excluded groups and their needs within one framework thus facilitating the reciprocal impact of policies and programmes. EU and some bilateral development agencies have reorganized their policies along these lines, placing particular emphasis on issues of social cohesion and inclusion. Also against this background, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs has partnered with the Department for International Development (United Kingdom) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to explore some of the issues underlying the transformation of the theoretical framework of social exclusion into the basis for an action-based strategy for social inclusion. Such an approach could place ageing issues within the development context and constitute a more effective platform for the provision of the international assistance needed to resolve social exclusion of different social groups.

V. Conclusion

68. This report illustrates progress in building or strengthening national capacity on ageing and provides several examples of international assistance to support countries in their efforts to implement the Madrid Plan of Action. The report also demonstrates that issues related to ageing and older persons remain relatively low on the list of items in both national and international development agendas, as evidenced by the insufficient political attention and inadequate financial support geared towards building national capacity for implementing the Madrid Plan of Action. As a result, the lack of awareness of many Member States regarding the Madrid Plan of Action and its recommendations and their consequent failure to raise the issue of ageing as one requiring international assistance further contribute to the low profile of ageing issues.

69. In order to achieve the broad objectives of incorporating the challenges and opportunities of population ageing and the concerns of older persons into the policies, programmes and projects of Governments, as well as intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, several strategic measures are needed. It is therefore recommended that:

- **Greater attention be paid to building capacity to reduce poverty among older persons, particularly older women, by mainstreaming ageing issues into poverty reduction strategies and national development frameworks, and by encouraging greater consultation with older persons in the course of developing, implementing and monitoring poverty reduction plans**
- **Ageing-related policies be conducted through inclusive consultations that involve government ministries and parliaments as well as other stakeholders and social partners, in the interest of creating national policy ownership and consensus-building**
- **Governments and organizations forge stronger partnerships with civil society groups, including organizations of older persons, academia, research foundations, community-based organizations and the private sector, in an effort to help build capacity on ageing issues**
- **Governments designate specific institutions, such as agencies, ministries, national committees or advisory councils, to be primarily responsible for handling follow-up of national plans of action on ageing. At the beginning of the first cycle of the review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action, the General Assembly may wish to encourage Governments to promote a bottom-up participatory approach throughout the entire implementation process**
- **Governments, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations demonstrate commitment and provide additional funding to research and data-collection initiatives on ageing in order to better understand the challenges and opportunities presented by population ageing and provide policymakers with more accurate and more specific information on gender and ageing.**